REPORT

ON THE

ADMINISTRATION OF BENGAL, 1903-1904.



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PART I.



GENERAL SUMMARY.

SUMMARY.

TABLE OF CONTENTS.

ADMINISTRATION OF BENGAL, 1903-1904.

PART I.—GENERAL SUMMARY.

CHAPTER I.

POLITICAL AND PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY.

HEAD-QUARTERS OF GOVERNMENT AND TOURS OF HIS HONOUR THE LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR OF BENGAL DURING 1903-1904.

Head-quarters of Government.

DARJEELING was the head-quarters of Government from the 15th of April to the 15th of July and again from the 18th of August to the 29th of October. For the remainder of the year the head-quarters were at Calcutta. Before leaving for the hills in April Mr. (now Sir James) Bourdillon paid a visit to Chittagong in connection with matters affecting local Railway administration and the development of that town as a port. During his stay at Darjeeling His Honour paid short visits to Kalimpong and the Cinchona Plantation at Sarail. He also went to Kurseong, where he considered various schemes for the development of that place as a health resort.

Rains tour.

2. The usual rains tour commenced on the 15th of July, and the first portion of it was devoted to visiting the Bihar districts. The journey was broken at Buktearpur, where His Honour formally opened the Buktearpur-Bihar Light Railway. After visiting in turn Bankipur, Chapra, Hathwa and Monghyr, His Honour met the *Rhotas* at Sahebganj, and from that place proceeded to Malda. From Malda he visited the ruins at Pandua and inspected the restoration work in progress there. He returned to Calcutta by river, stopping on the way to hold a durbar at Berhampur and to visit the battle-field of Plassey. He reached Calcutta on the 31st July, and returned from there to Darjeeling on the 18th of August.

Cold weather tours.

3. On the 31st of October Mr. Bourdillon returned to Calcutta, and on the forenoon of the 2nd November handed over charge of the office of Lieutenant-Governor to Sir Andrew Fraser, K.C.S.I. On the 15th of November, His Honour left for Purulia; and, after one day's halt there, proceeded to Palamau, visiting Gaya and Bodh Gaya on the way. On the 24th of November a tour in Orissa was commenced; Puri, Bhubaneswar, Cuttack and Balasore being visited in turn. After a stay of a few days in Calcutta, the Lieutenant-Governor proceeded to Dacca, from which place a brief visit was paid to Mymensingh.

His Honour was unable to leave Calcutta again until the 27th of January, on which date he proceeded to Muzaffarpur, where he was present at the conclusion of the Bihar Light Horse Camp of Exercise. From Muzaffarpur His Honour went to Darbhanga; and on his way

back to Calcutta he visited Murshidabad and Berhampur in connection with the construction of the new asylum at the latter place.

At the beginning of February a short river tour was made to Kalna, a subdivision of Burdwan; and on the way back the municipality of Santipur was visited and a two days' halt made at Chinsura. On the 14th of February a visit was paid to Pusa in connection with the establishment of the Agricultural Research Station and College at that place. On his return from Pusa, His Honour left for Ranchi and Hazaribagh, returning *viâ* Giridih on the 27th February.

CHANGES IN THE ADMINISTRATION.

Changes in the administration.

4. No important administrative changes occurred during the year.

RELATIONS WITH TRIBUTARY STATES AND FRONTIER AFFAIRS.

Sikkim.

5. In Sikkim the year was one of prosperity and the public health was good. The rainfall of the year was normal, and the maize crop was a bumper one. There was some dislocation of labour in consequence of the demand for coolies in connection with the Tibet Mission; but this disadvantage was more than fully counterbalanced by the high wages earned by the coolies employed, and by the good prices obtained for maize taken by the Commissariat Department. There was a considerable falling off in the trade with Tibet on account of the unsettled state of affairs in that country.

Bhutan.

6. Relations with Bhutan continued friendly throughout the year.

Cooch Behar.

7. In Cooch Behar the year was favourable, the rice crop being plentiful. The outturn of jute and tobacco was comparatively poor. The latter commodity, however, commanded good prices; and in this way growers of the crop were compensated to a great extent for shortness in production. The public health was generally good. A satisfactory feature of the year was the substantial increase in the earnings of the State Railway, which promises to be a really profitable investment. There was little serious crime. The results of such cases as were committed to the Sessions were however unsatisfactory, only 10 *per cent.* ending in conviction. Education received much attention; and during the year the new system of vernacular education in force in Bengal was introduced into the State.

Hill Tippera.

8. In Tippera the rainfall was favourable, and the rice and cotton crops were in consequence excellent. The public health was good; and, as high prices were obtained for food-crops, the material condition of the people was very satisfactory.

Towards the close of the year an heir was born to the Jubraj, the heir-apparent. One of the Kumars joined the Imperial Cadet Corps, while two others were admitted to the Rajkumar College at Ajmere.

Tributary and Political States of Chota Nagpur.

9. In Gangpur the criminal and civil administration was, for the greater part of the year conducted by a member of the Provincial Executive Service deputed by Government for the purpose. The present system of supervision of the States is not altogether satisfactory; and the Lieutenant-Governor has recently deputed an officer of the Indian Civil Service to tour through these territories with orders to report on the general tendency of the administration in each State and to

make suggestions for improving the present means of control. The rainfall was favourable, and public health almost uniformly good. Crops were excellent in most of the States, and the price of rice fell or remained stationary in all. The material condition of the people in all the States was generally satisfactory. Orders were issued during the year for the commencement of settlement operations under the supervision of the Director of Land Records in the States of Seraikela and Kharsawan, in the former of which agrarian troubles had arisen in the preceding year.

10. In the Tributary Mahals of Orissa the public health was not good, cholera appearing in a sporadic or epidemic form in all the States except one. The rainfall was well distributed, and the outturn of the crops was good. In Moharbhanj prospecting for minerals was conducted with promising results. Experiments were also made in that State and in Keonjhar in sericulture, which promises to be a profitable industry in those States in the future. **Tributary Mahals of Orissa.**

CONDITION OF THE PEOPLE IN BENGAL.

11. The harvests of the year were generally good, and in consequence the prices of the principal food-grains fell in nearly all districts. There was also an appreciable fall in the retail price of salt as a result of the reduction in the duty levied on that article. Wages for the most part remained stationary. Notwithstanding the general prosperity, the year was not a healthy one; and, although the number of deaths from fever declined largely, there was a more than counterbalancing increase in the number of deaths from cholera and plague. **Condition of the people.**

CHAPTER II.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE LAND.

REALISATION OF THE REVENUE.

12. The steady increase in the number of money-orders sent in payment of land revenue and cesses which has occurred indicates that the system is growing in popularity with the proprietors of petty estates. Except in the Chittagong Division the payment of rent by money-order has not attained much popularity. **Payment of Land Revenue and Cesses and rent by Money-order.**

13. The revenue sale law was worked with moderation; and, although there was an increase in the number of defaults, there were fewer compulsory sales. The Certificate Department was administered efficiently, the number of cases disposed of exceeding the nnmber instituted. **Revenue Sale Law, Certificate Department.**

14. Seventy-two thousand six hundred and seventy-six mutations under the Land Registration Act, that is to say, 4·5 *per cent.* of the interests in existence, were allowed during the year. The registers prescribed by the Act were generally kept in good condition. A Bill[1] to amend the Act with the object of improving the present system of maintaining these registers will shortly be introduced into the Bengal Legislative Council. **Land Registration.**

Co-operative Credit Societies.

15. Twelve new Co-operative Credit Societies were established during the year; and at the close of the year the number of such Societies in existence was fifty-eight, the greater portion of which are in Government or Wards' Estates. The recent appointment of a member of the Indian Civil Service as Registrar under the Co-operative Credit Societies Act (Act X of 1904) will, it is anticipated, give a great stimulus to the development of these Societies.

SURVEYS AND SETTLEMENTS.

Surveys and Settlements.

16. Survey and settlement operations were in progress in eighteen districts. The year's programme, which was considerably more ambitious than that of the preceding year, was with some few exceptions carried out. The attitude of the Mundas towards the operations in progress in the district of Ranchi was friendly. Various reforms were introduced by the Superintendent of Provincial Surveys in the department under his control with the result that the cost of survey work was considerably reduced.

LAND RECORDS.

Land Records.

17. There is nothing of importance to record under this head. The schemes submitted for the maintenance of Land Records in North Bihar, Orissa and Chittagong are still under the consideration of the Government of India.

WASTE LANDS.

Administration of the Sundarbans.

18. Important orders were issued regarding the future administration of the Sundarbans. The system of leasing out waste lands to capitalists in that area having led to the creation of a large class of middlemen and to the rack-renting of the actual cultivators of the soil, it was decided that an experiment should be made with a system of peasant colonisation financed by the State. In pursuance of that policy also it was decided that the post of Commissioner in the Sundarbans established by Regulation IX of 1816 should be abolished by the repeal of that Regulation; and that the work hitherto done by the Commissioner in the Sundarbans should in future be carried out by a Deputy Collector or Deputy Collectors working under the immediate supervision of the Collectors of the districts of the 24-Parganas, Khulna and Backergunge, in which the Sundarbans are situated.

GOVERNMENT, WARDS' AND ATTACHED ESTATES.

Government, Wards' and Attached Estates.

19. In estates held direct by Government the total collections were over 100 *per cent.* of the current demand, while there was a large reduction in the outstanding balance at the close of the year. In Wards' and Attached Estates there was a large falling off both in the total payments to Government on account of revenue and cesses, and in the total collections of rents and cesses, owing to the fact that several new estates have lately been taken under the management of the Court of Wards, and that some of those estates have previously been mismanaged.

REVENUE-PAYING AND RENT-PAYING CLASSES.

20. When the Bengal Tenancy Act of 1885 was passed, provision was made in it for the preparation of a record of rights at the instance either of Government or of private parties. Much advantage was taken of these enabling provisions; and in the year 1898 the provisions of the Act relating to survey and settlement operations were amended with the object of facilitating and improving the procedure to be followed. Further experience shows that the Act, as it at present stands, fails to afford sufficient authority to the record of rights when made and to prevent illegal enhancements of rents being made out of Court. The question of the further amendment of the Act is, therefore, now under the consideration of Government. **Relations between landlords and tenants.**

CHAPTER III.

PROTECTION.

LEGISLATION.

21. Four Acts were passed by the Bengal Council during the year 1903-1904, viz., Act V of 1903 [the Chota Nagpur Tenancy (Amendment) Act] and Acts I to III of 1904, viz., the Bengal Tramways (Amendment) Act, the Bengal Public Parks Act, and the Bengal Settled Estates Act. **Acts passed.**

22. Towards the close of the year the Select Committee appointed to consider and report on the Bill to consolidate and amend the Bengal Excise Act, VII (B.C.) of 1878, submitted their report. After discussion in Council, the Bill was referred back to the Select Committee with instructions to incorporate in it a definite procedure for ascertaining public opinion before the grant of licenses. The Committee framed proposals to that effect; and these were in due course submitted to the Government of India. That Government, while fully accepting the principles which underlay the proposals made by this Government, expressed doubts whether the precise procedure proposed was well designed for the purpose, and requested that the opinions of District Officers might be called for in the matter. These are now under the consideration of the Board of Revenue. **Bills brought before Council. Bills to amend the Excise and Local Self-Government Acts.**

A Bill to amend the Bengal Local Self-Government Act of 1885 (Ben. Act III of 1885) was introduced and read in Council on the 26th March 1904.

POLICE.

23. Police work suffered from an insufficiency of staff, both superior and subordinate. The discipline of the force was on the whole satisfactory, and the number of judicial and departmental punishments inflicted was the lowest on record during the decade. The work of the town *chaukidars* is, as in previous years, unfavourably reported on, and it has been decided that these men should be gradually replaced by the regular police. The utility of the village police force is increasing year **Police work in the mufassal.**

by year; and the appointment of head *chaukidars*, or *daffadars*, has contributed largely to this result.

The number of cognizable offences reported has remained almost stationary for the past three years. The most noticeable features of the crime statistics of the year under review were a decrease in the number of riots and an increase in dacoity, robberies and cattle thefts. The newly-developed Criminal Investigation Department did good work during the year; and it is hoped that the staff will before long be materially strengthened. Some improvement has taken place as regards the number of remands granted by the courts; but the small proportion of false cases in which prosecutions were instituted is unsatisfactory.

Police work in Calcutta.

24. The discipline of the Calcutta Police Force was not altogether satisfactory. The occurrence of a large number of vacancies in the ranks of constables is ascribed to the fact that, owing to better supervision, opportunities for illicit gain have been curtailed, and that a constable's pay compares unfavourably with the wages earned by men of the same class otherwise employed in the city. Proposals have been submitted to the Government of India with the object of removing the latter grievance.

There was a considerable increase in the serious crime of the year; but this is believed to have been due to better reporting. Commitments to the Sessions of old offenders showed a satisfactory increase; but there are still indications that the Magistrates are too ready to deal summarily with offenders who would more suitably be committed to a superior court for trial.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE.

Work of the year.

25. The number and constitution of the Criminal Courts of the Province underwent no material change during the year. Work in the Courts of first instance increased. There was a slight decline in the appellate work of Magistrates, and a small increase in their revisional work. The work of the Courts of Sessions showed a slight increase as regards Sessions cases and revisional work, and a decline in respect of appellate work. In the High Court appellate work slightly declined, while the number of applications for revision and transfer shows a marked decrease.

JAILS.

Jails.

26. Admissions to the several jails of Bengal declined by over 2,000. The average daily population of prisoners of all classes was 19,558. Although much has been done to increase jail accommodation in the Province, it is still insufficient, especially in the case of under-trial prisoners. Over three lakhs of rupees were spent during the year on jail buildings, and provision was made for the expenditure of a still larger sum during the current year. The health of the prisoners was generally good, and the jail death-rate (23·5 *per mille*) was much below the Provincial death-rate (33·33 *per mille*). The Barisal Jail was, however, unhealthier even than in former years, and returned the alarming rate of 90·6 *per mille*. Vigorous steps have recently been taken to improve the

drainage of this jail, to enlarge the site, to increase the accommodation in the buildings, to demolish undesirable buildings, or cause them to be vacated, to increase the ventilation of the wards and workshops, and in numerous other ways to improve the sanitation of the jail. It is hoped that, as a result of these measures, a marked improvement in the death-rate will soon be effected.

CIVIL JUSTICE.

27. A slight reduction was effected in the total number of original suits pending before the High Court at the close of the year. Although considerable progress was made by the Court with civil appellate work, nearly two years' work remained to be disposed of at the close of the year. **Calcutta High Court.**

28. There was a large increase in the number of suits instituted under the rent law in the Subordinate Civil Courts. This was in a large measure due to the fact that in districts in which survey and settlement operations have of recent years been in progress, the filing of rent-suits has been postponed pending the completion of proceedings. **Subordinate Civil Courts.**

REGISTRATION.

29. There was a falling off of nearly $1\frac{1}{2}$ *per cent.* in the number of documents registered during the year, with a corresponding decrease in the receipts of the department. This decline is ascribed to the fact that the year under review was a prosperous one and that in consequence there was less general necessity for transferring and mortgaging lands. Far-reaching proposals for the reorganisation of this Department are at the present time under the consideration of the Government of India. **Registration.**

MUNICIPAL ADMINISTRATION AND LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT.

30. The Municipal administration of the year affords ground for considerable satisfaction. Collections averaged 98·6 *per cent.* of the current demand, a ratio that has only been once equalled; while outstandings fell to 7·5 *per cent.* of the current demand, a result which has never been approximated. The total expenditure incurred increased by over 6 lakhs of rupees. Many fresh schemes of sanitation and water-supply were undertaken; and it is gratifying to find that the increased attention paid to these subjects in recent years has been accompanied by a steady decline in the death-rate from fever, dysentery and cholera. A definite scheme for the better assessment of Municipal taxes has now been formulated, and it is expected that the revised procedure will generally be adopted. **Municipalities outside Calcutta.**

31. There was a marked increase during the year in the interest taken by the Municipal Commissioners in the administration of the affairs of the Calcutta Corporation; and Government has recently expressed itself as fully satisfied that the period which has elapsed since the passing of the Act of 1899 has been one of continuous, and for the most part successful, effort after reform. **Calcutta Municipality.**

The scheme for placing the Accounts Department on a satisfactory basis had not been successfully carried out by the close of the year under

review. The matter was, however, taken up after the close of the year, and it was decided to raise the pay of the post of Chief Accountant. This step having been taken, it is hoped that the reorganisation of the department will be carried to completion at no distant date. The Collector's department not only maintained, but improved upon, its high standard of efficiency; current collections on the net demand amounting to no less than 99·22 *per cent.* Practically the whole amount was, as in the previous year collected without recourse to coercive measures.

In spite of many obstacles the Suburban drainage scheme was vigorously pushed on; and it is hoped that this scheme will soon be brought to completion. Good progress was made during the year with the introduction of the continuous water-supply scheme, the number of persons supplied under that scheme having nearly doubled during the year under review. The unfiltered water-supply has given rise to some anxiety, the supply in some localities having fallen below the amount required for successful sanitation. Much was done during the year in the direction of removing objectionable *bustis*, opening up and improving public squares, closing insanitary burial-grounds and adding to and improving the markets of the town.

Puri Lodging-house Act.

32. The Puri Lodging-house Act worked satisfactorily during the year in all places in which it was in force. The health of the pilgrims was generally good, and the total number of deaths amongst them was nearly half the number recorded in the previous year. Various schemes for the improvement of the sanitation of the town of Puri are at the present time under the consideration of Government.

District Boards.

33. No change occurred in the number of District and Local Boards. In a recent Resolution Government has expressed its opinion that the growth of local self-government in Bengal, though quiet and unostentatious, has nevertheless been healthy and vigorous. A Bill to amend the Bengal Local Self-Government Act was introduced into Council in March 1904. The objects of the proposed amendments are (1) to legalise expenditure for veterinary purposes, (2) to give power to impose tolls on newly-constructed bridges until the initial cost and the capitalised value of the cost of maintenance and renewal have been recovered, (3) to give power to levy a rate for the purpose of meeting sums guaranteed by District Boards by way of interest on capital expended on railways and tramways, and (4) generally to remove flaws and omissions in the Act which experience of its working has shown to exist.

MARINE.

The Port of Calcutta.

34. The number of vessels arriving at and leaving the port of Calcutta showed a small increase, and the pilotage receipts improved by more than 6 *per cent.* There were no serious casualties.

It has been decided to increase the strength of the Pilot Service from 52 to 58, and arrangements have been made for the appointment of a larger number of Leadsmen Apprentices. The death-rate in hospital amongst European seamen declined during the year under review and was considerably below the quinquennial mean.

Calcutta Shipping Office.

35. The receipts of the Calcutta Shipping Office again showed an increase. The number of seamen shipped and discharged shows a steady upward movement. The number of European seamen employed, however,

continues to decline; the explanation given being that Masters of vessels find these men more expensive and less amenable to discipline than lascars.

36. The revenue of the Calcutta Port Trust was Rs. 79,65,378 and the expenditure Rs. 76,75,562, the surplus being Rs. 2,89,814. A portion of this surplus has been added to the Revenue Reserve Fund, which now stands at Rs. 18,17,827. In addition to the Revenue Reserve Fund and the Sinking Fund for the repayment of debenture loans taken in connection with capital expenditure, the Commissioners have a Depreciation Fund for vessels and plant and a Fire Insurance Fund. The balance at the credit of these funds stood at Rs. 13,99,297 at the close of the year. The Docks showed a surplus of Rs. 3,05,349, as compared with a balance of Rs. 1,54,292 in the previous year. **Calcutta Port Trust.**

37. A smaller number of vessels entered the port of Chittagong, but the aggregate tonnage of the vessels was greater. The export trade showed an increase of 66 *per cent.* in respect of the principal articles exported. During the year a river due of two annas per ton was imposed on all goods landed from or shipped into any sea-going steamer; and the earnings of the Trust showed a large increase, owing chiefly to this item of revenue. The Government of India has decided to give substantial help to the Port Trust; and during the year under review the balance of a loan due to Government, amounting to Rs. 87,282, was written off the accounts. Further financial help also has been promised for the purchase of a dredger to clear the bars of the river, for revetting the river banks, and for the construction of jetties, warehouses and other works. **Port of Chittagong.**

38. The trade of the Orissa ports again shewed a decline, owing chiefly to a diversion of trade from the sea to the Railway. **The ports of Orissa.**

CHAPTER IV.

PRODUCTION AND DISTRIBUTION.

AGRICULTURE.

39. One of the most important events of the year in connection with agriculture was the publication by the Government of India in February 1904 of a scheme for the establishment of an Imperial Agricultural Research Station, Experimental Farm and Agricultural College on the Pusa Estate in the Darbhanga district. **The Pusa Estate Scheme.**

40. The year was marked by considerable activity on the part of the Agricultural Department. Enquiries into the alleged deterioration of jute were continued; and special investigations were made regarding the practice of fraudulently watering the fibre. Special efforts were made to extend the cultivation of cotton. Government contributed largely, as in previous years, to the cost of the indigo research operations now being conducted in the Province. An experimental farm was started at Cuttack with the object of showing cultivators what can be done with water always at command; and experiments on similar lines will now be undertaken at the Dumraon and the Burdwan farms. With the assistance of Government **Work of the year.**

the Bengal Silk Committee continued to do useful work in popularising the use of healthy seed and extending mulberry plantations. After the close of the year a Provincial Agricultural Association was established at Calcutta. The Association works in co-operation with the Director of Agriculture and has for its object the 'dissemination of agricultural knowledge, and the awakening of further interest in and discussion about the agricultural development of the Province.' The first meeting of the Association was held in August 1904 at which the Lieutenant-Governor delivered an address in explanation of the purpose for which the Association had been constituted.

WEATHER AND CROPS.

Weather and crops.

41. The rainfall of the year was below the normal in nearly every district of the Province. The outturn for the whole Province of all the crops taken together amounted to 86 *per cent.* of the normal, as against 90 *per cent.* in the previous year.

HORTICULTURE.

Royal Botanic Garden, Calcutta.

42. At the Royal Botanic Garden considerable progress was made with an enquiry which has been instituted regarding the various species of agave which occur in India. Investigations were continued concerning various species of Indian hemp.

FORESTS.

Forests.

43. The most important changes made during the year in the area under forests was the addition of 45,449 acres to the Reserved Forests in the Chittagong Division, and of 50,772 acres to the Protected Forests in the Puri Division. There was a considerable falling off in the total produce removed from the forests, chiefly due to a decline in the sale of timber and firewood in the Sundarbans Division, owing to the enforcement of the rules prohibiting the cutting of undersized *sundri* logs. The most serious forest fire of the year was one which crossed from the Native State of Bonai and destroyed 80 square miles of forest in the Singhbhum Division. All Native States under the administration of the Local Government have been addressed with the object of minimising the risks from fires originating in such States. Arrangements have also been concluded with the Nepal Durbar for preventing fires on the British-Nepal frontier.

MANUFACTURES, MINES AND FACTORIES.

Manufactures.

44. The area under jute and the total outturn of the crop were both in excess of the figures of the previous year. The jute and cotton mills of the Province gave employment to 122,724 and 10,230 persons, respectively. The number of tea-plantations was 422, giving employment to 108,349 persons. The low prices realised owing to excessive supply have administered a much needed check to indiscriminate cultivation. The outturn of indigo was satisfactory, being one and-a-half times greater than that of the preceding two years. The season at the Government Cinchona Plantation was a favourable one; the outturn of the year being 12,314 lbs. of sulphate of quinine and 3,800 lbs. of cinchona febrifuge.

45. There were 279 coal-mines at work during the year, giving employment to 74,538 persons. The total output was 6,361,212 tons, or 101,976 tons in excess of the outturn of the previous year. **Mines.**

46. There was no change in the number of factories under the operation of the Indian Factories Act. The average daily number of operatives employed was 213,014. There was a decrease of 32 in the number of accidents reported. The health of the operatives was good and their general condition prosperous. **Factories.**

TRADE.

47. The value of the foreign sea-borne trade of the Province, which amounted to 103½ crores of rupees, was 11 *per cent.* in advance of the figures of the previous year and is the highest yet reached. Almost the whole of the foreign trade of Bengal is centred in Calcutta, Chittagong absorbing 2·3 *per cent.* only of the trade. The exports of jute from the latter port are considerable; while the facilities afforded in recent years for the shipment of tea by the opening of the Assam-Bengal Railway and the establishment of a steamer service in direct communication with Europe have given rise to a considerable export trade in that article. **Foreign trade.**

48. Among the articles of import, cotton goods, as usual, represent about half the total value; and next in importance come iron and steel, sugar, petroleum and machinery. Of the total value of the imports about 71·6 *per cent.* came from Europe; while 62·1 *per cent.* of this amount came from the United Kingdom. Among the articles of export, jute, raw and manufactured, represented about 35 *per cent.* of the foreign exports. About 54·4 *per cent.* of the export trade was with European countries; the United Kingdom taking about 31·6 *per cent.* of this amount. **Articles of import and export.**

49. The frontier trade of the Province by land with Nepal, Tibet, Sikkim and Bhutan was valued at 258 lakhs; about nine-tenths of this amount representing trade with Nepal. It is noteworthy that the value of the imports into Bengal from these countries (161 lakhs) is considerably greater than that of the exports (97 lakhs) from Bengal to them. **Frontier trade.**

50. Of the trade with other provinces and parts of India, that by sea was valued at about 12 crores. Of this amount, imports, principally rice and kerosene oil from Burma, and cotton goods from Bombay, represented nearly 54 crores; and exports, chiefly coal, grain and pulse, and gunny-bags, 7 crores. The external trade of Bengal by rail and river was valued at over 44 crores of rupees; the imports, consisting principally of produce brought down to Calcutta for export over seas, being valued at about 26 crores. The exports were valued at over 18 crores; and consisted chiefly of goods imported into Calcutta by sea. Of a like nature, but more extensive, is the trade of the Province with its chief port; the total imports into Calcutta from the Bengal districts being valued at over 40 crores and the exports at nearly 24 crores. **External and internal trade of Bengal.**

BUILDINGS AND ROADS.

51. The want of accommodation for the bonding of salt at the Sulkea Salt golas was to some extent relieved by subdividing several of the golas. More room was provided in the opium godowns, Calcutta, **Imperial Works.**

for storing the large outturn of the season; and a commencement was made in establishing weighment and settlement centres in the opium districts. The check station at Barrackpore in connection with the Magnetic Survey of India was finished; while the new Foreign and Military Secretariat building in Calcutta was almost completed.

Provincial Works.

52. Additional accommodation was provided for several of the Civil and Criminal Courts in the Province. The increasing requirements of the Calcutta High Court necessitated the purchase of the adjoining premises, Nos. 4 and 5, Old Post Office Street. The construction of quarters for munsifs continued. The want of suitable circuit-houses at some of the important stations for the use of the Lieutenant-Governor and other high officials was recognised; and steps were taken, where necessary, to provide such buildings. Of the various Jail works, the most important was the commencement of the new Presidency Jail at Alipore. The construction of quarters for Inspectors of Police was taken in hand. Educational works included projects for a new College and School of Engineering at Dacca; and much progress was made throughout the Province in the construction of hostels, or boarding-houses, for students. Several houses were purchased or built for the residence of Government officials in stations where it is difficult to obtain house accommodation.

COMMUNICATIONS.

Communications.

53. The opening out of road communications to meet the needs of the Tibet Mission was vigorously pushed forward. Roads to serve as feeders to railways in the districts of Midnapore, Nadia, Murshidabad, Rangpur and Monghyr were under construction.

RAILWAYS AND TRAMWAYS.

Administration.

54. As in previous years, the main lines of railway and their branches in this Province continued under the direct administration of the Government of India; the Government of Bengal administering only a few short branches and light railways constructed by private enterprise.

Mileage.

55. The total mileage of the Province at the close of the year was 4,564 miles. During the year 250 miles were opened; of which 156 miles were on the standard, 73½ miles on the metre, and 20½ miles on the narrow (or 2′ 6″) gauge. There were 732¾ miles of railway under construction; of which 298½ miles are on the standard, and 434¼ miles on the metre, gauge. A metre gauge line from Mausi to Baptiahi, with a branch from Sihursa to Murliganj, was sanctioned during the year as a part of the Tirhut State Railway.

Light Railways.

56. Of light railways on the 2′ 6″ gauge, 32 miles were under construction in the Moharbhanj State (Tributary Mahals, Orissa) in connection with the Bengal-Nagpur Railway, and 49 miles in extension of light railways under the control of this Government. The Bukhtiarpore-Bihar Light Railway was opened for traffic on the 1st July 1903; while the extension of the Tarkessur-Magra Light Railway to Tribeni was almost completed at the end of the year. The extension of the Howrah-Amta Light Railway to Champadanga was under construction; and sanction was accorded during the year to the construction of a light railway from Baraset to Basirhat, a distance of 26 miles. The best results

in the shape of earnings were shown by the Darjeeling-Himalayan and Howrah-Amta lines, the return on their capital outlay being over 10 *per cent.*

57. The principal surveys completed were (1) for a line to link the Murshidabad branch of the Eastern Bengal State Railway system with the Azimganj branch of the East Indian Railway, together with a bridge over the Bhagirathi; (2) for a line to connect Ondal with Sainthia, both on the East Indian Railway; and (3) for a bridge over the Ganges from Damukdia to Sara. The survey of a line from Barharwa, *viâ* Azimganj, to Katwa was in progress; as also surveys of the proposed Katihar to Godagari and Raiganj to Malda lines. **Surveys.**

58. Two important matters on which the Bengal Government expressed its views to the Government of India were—(1) the question whether Government should exercise its option of taking over the Darjeeling-Himalayan Railway, and (2) the renewal of the contract for the working of the Tirhut State Railway by the agency of the Bengal and North-Western Railway Company. The question of connecting Ranchi with Purulia by means of a light railway was under consideration. **Important matters under consideration.**

CANALS.

59. The Major Irrigation works in Bengal are divided into two classes:— **Canals.**

I.—Productive works. II.—Protective works.

The Productive works comprise the Orissa, Midnapore, Hijili Tidal and Sone Canals. The Hijili Tidal Canal is for navigation only; while the others are both for irrigation and navigation. The total area irrigated by these canals during the year under review was 809,331 acres, or 13,302 acres more than in the previous year. The increase was chiefly due to an extension of the areas irrigated from the Sone Canals.

60. The receipts during the year from irrigation, navigation and miscellaneous sources in connection with the productive works were Rs. 20,14,647, or Rs. 99,709 less than the figures for the previous year. This considerable decline was due for the most part to smaller receipts during the year under review on account of areas irrigated from the Sone Canals in 1902-1903. **Receipts from productive works.**

61. The Protective works are the Tribeni and Dhaka Canals. Considerable progress was made during the year with the construction of the former. The Dhaka Canal was practically completed during the year. **Protective works.**
The Madaripore Bhil route in connection with the Calcutta and Eastern Canals was widened and deepened during the year. **Minor works.**

EMBANKMENTS AND DRAINAGE WORKS.

62. The total length of the embankments maintained during the year was 2,147 miles; the area protected being 8,681,063 acres. The total expenditure incurred on embankments and drainage works was Rs. 4,33,931, of which Rs. 3,87,248 were spent on work connected with embankments. **Embankments and Drainage Works.**

CHAPTER V

REVENUE AND FINANCE.

IMPERIAL FINANCE.

Statistics.

63. Imperial receipts amounted to Rs. 14,83,72,557, as against Rs. 14,97,83,804 in 1902-1903; and the charges were Rs. 4,07,30,064, as compared with Rs. 3,26,95,886 in the preceding year. The decrease in eceipts was chiefly under the heads of "Land Revenue" and "Salt;" due, in the former case, to larger transfers to Provincial Revenues to meet special expenditure, and in the latter, to a reduction in the rate of duty levied. The increase in expenditure was almost entirely under "Opium," and was due to larger payments to cultivators on account of a largely increased outturn.

LAND REVENUE.

Statistics.

64. The total current Land Revenue demand increased from Rs. 4,02,59,280 to Rs. 4,04,71,325. The total collections of the year, as also the percentages of current collections on current demand, and of the total collections on the total demand, were better than in any of the preceding five years.

CUSTOMS.

Changes in Import and Export Duties.

65. By a notification issued in December 1903 the Government of India remitted, in respect of any country which was a party to the Brussels Convention, all countervailing duties on sugar produced after the 31st August 1903. Under Act IX of 1903, and from the 1st April of that year, a cess of ¼ of a pie per pound was levied on all tea produced in India and exported from any port beyond the limits of British India. The net receipts from this cess during the year were Rs. 2,15,870.

Statistics.

66. The net revenue from customs amounted to Rs. 3,82,18,192, or 13·8 *per cent.* less than in the previous year. The decrease was mainly due to the reduction in the duty on salt.

OPIUM.

Administrative changes.

67. Several administrative changes were introduced in the Opium Department during the year, the most important of which was the abolition in the Benares Agency of the system of remunerating the *lambardars*, or middlemen, by the primitive system known as *khurchan* (scrapings) and the introduction in its place of a method of payment by a commission of 2½ *per cent.* on the value of the opium received from the cultivators.

Various measures have been taken to improve the prospects of the superior officers of the Department; and it is hoped that in future the service will be contented, and that at the same time it will be more efficient than it has ever been in the past.

Statistics.

68. In both Agencies the season was an exceptionally good one, the outturn showing a large increase. The area settled in the Bihar Agency decreased still further. The decrease was shared by all the Sub-Agencies except one, and is said to be due to the competition of more lucrative crops. The total outturn of provision opium during the year was 64,739 chests. In spite of a large increase in the supply, prices rose

by over Rs. 100 a chest; the favourable market being ascribed to a rise in the exchange value of silver and to an increased demand for Bengal opium in China and other opium-consuming countries.

SALT.

69. The question of the amendment of the Bengal Salt Act, VII (B.C.) of 1864, which has been held in abeyance since 1898, was revived during the year. The Board of Revenue were asked to report whether, in view of the experience acquired in recent years, the draft Bill introduced into the Bengal Council in 1898 should be proceeded with, and, if so, what changes or modifications should be made in the provisions as originally drafted. The Board's report on the subject is under the consideration of Government. A scheme for the reorganisation of the Salt Department has recently been sanctioned by the Secretary of State. Administrative changes.

70. Imports of salt into Calcutta during the year increased by 6·6 *per cent.* Wholesale prices fell by about 8 annas per maund in consequence of the reduction in the rate of duty; while retail prices fell by 5 to 10 annas per maund. The fall in prices has not hitherto been attended by an increase in consumption. It is possible, however, that results would have been different but for the fact that for several weeks before the close of the year under report clearances were greatly curtailed in expectation of a further reduction in duty. Statistics.

EXCISE.

71. The net revenue from excise, which amounted to Rs. 1,54,83,634, showed an increase of more than 3 *per cent.* over the previous year's figures, and was the highest on record. Practically the whole of the increase occurred under the head of "Country Spirits." The incidence of excise revenue during the year was 3 annas 5 pies per head. There was a large increase in the number of persons arrested for offences against the Excise and Opium Laws, mainly owing to an abnormal rise in the number of cases of illicit distillation in the Sonthal Parganas. Statistics.

STAMPS.

72. The revenue collected under the Stamp and Court-fees Acts amounted to Rs. 1,98,35,542. There was an increase under "Judicial" stamps, and a decrease under "Non-Judicial" stamps, the net result being an increase of Rs. 2,65,104. Statistics.

INCOME-TAX.

73. Owing to the enactment of Act XI of 1903, raising the minimum income assessable from Rs. 500 to Rs. 1,000, the number of persons finally assessed decreased by 74,631, or 59·2 *per cent.;* while the final demand for the year fell by Rs. 8,51,746, or 16·1 *per cent.* The effect of the enactment has been, therefore, to relieve more than one-half of the former assessees, with a sacrifice of less than one-sixth of the demand. The cost of assessment and collection fell by over 8 *per cent.* in consequence of reorganisations of establishment rendered possible by the elimination of the smaller assessees. Further reorganisations were made with effect from the 1st April 1904, the number of Income-Tax assessors being reduced by nearly a half. Statistics.

FOREST REVENUE.

Statistics.

74. The net revenue from "Forests" was Rs. 3,38,086, which is much below the figure for the previous year. Practically the whole of the decrease occurred in the Sundarbans Division, where there was a large decline in the sale of timber, owing to a strict enforcement of the rules prohibiting the cutting of undersized *sundri* logs.

PROVINCIAL FINANCE.

Provincial Finance.

75. Towards the close of the year the terms of the new Financial Settlement with the Local Government were communicated by the Government of India. The chief feature of the new settlement is that no period has been fixed for its duration, whereas previous settlements were concluded at intervals of five years. The year opened with a balance of Rs. 55,29,422, and closed with one of Rs. 1,42,52,918; the receipts of the year having amounted to Rs. 6,34,20,132, or roughly an excess of nearly 110 lakhs over those of the previous year.

LOCAL FINANCE.

Statistics.

76. The total receipts of the Incorporated Local Funds amounted to Rs. 1,11,55,483 and the charges to Rs. 1,14,36,172; the closing balance being reduced from Rs. 42,42,717 to Rs. 39,62,028. The receipts of the Excluded Local Funds were Rs. 10,03,051, and the charges Rs. 8,91,552; the closing balance rising from Rs. 4,99,857 to Rs. 6,11,356. There was an improvement in the financial condition of the Chittagong Port Fund, owing to the imposition of river dues and to a general rise under the other heads of account.

ROAD AND PUBLIC WORKS CESSES.

Statistics.

77. Road and Public Works cesses were, as in previous years, levied at the maximum rate of one anna in the rupee in the 43 districts in which the Cess Act IX (B.C.) of 1880 is in force. There was an increase of nearly 2½ lakhs in the current demand, the result of valuations or revaluations, partial or complete, which were in progress or concluded during the year in 29 districts. Collections increased by Rs. 1,33,688.

CHAPTER VI.

VITAL STATISTICS AND MEDICAL SERVICE.

VITAL STATISTICS.

Vital Statistics.

78. There was a slight fall in the provincial birth-rate, which is attributed to the general unhealthiness of the preceding year. The number of deaths registered showed little variation from the figures of 1902. Deaths from cholera and plague increased by over 85,000; while owing to the comparative dryness of the year, deaths from fever fell by 67,000. The total number of deaths from cholera was over 2,00,000, the mortality being higher than in any of the previous six years except 1900. The virulence of the disease during the year is generally attributed to the late commencement of the monsoon, which resulted in serious pollution of the local water-supply.

79. Plague was epidemic in the metropolitan districts of Hooghly, Howrah and the 24-Parganas, and in most of the districts of Bihar. The number of deaths from the disease was more than double the number recorded in the year 1902, though considerably less than that returned for the year 1901. The highest mortality occured both in Calcutta and in Bihar towards the end of March. No change was made in the plague policy followed. In Calcutta the chief preventive measures adopted were the disinfection and demolition of plague-infected quarters, and in the districts the evacuation of houses and disinfection. Little or no obstruction was offered by the people to the measures taken for their relief. **Plague.**

EMIGRATION.

80. The number of emigrants who embarked for the colonies during the year was considerably less than in the year 1902; the decrease being attributed to the general prosperity of the agricultural classes and consequent unwillingness to emigrate. **Colonial Emigration.**

81. In November 1903 the Government of India, in replying to a representation made to them by the Indian Tea Association regarding the recruitment of labourers for Assam, enunciated the general policy which should be followed in the administration of the Act. This letter was circulated to all officers in Bengal concerned with the working of the Act. **Inland Emigration.**

With the object of effecting economy in respect of the Inland Labour Transport Fund, it was decided to employ the Travelling Superintendent of Emigration only during the six months (October to March) in which emigration is active. There was a large decrease in the number of emigrants despatched to the labour districts, the decline being, as in the case of emigration to the colonies, ascribed to the general prosperity of the year.

MEDICAL INSTITUTIONS.

82. There was a considerable falling off in the number of in-patients attending the several public hospitals and dispensaries in Calcutta, which is ascribed to improvement in the public health of the town. The number of out-door patients was slightly in excess of the figures for 1902. It is satisfactory to note that the attendance of female patients was the highest on record for the last 11 years. **Calcutta Institutions.**

83. The number of dispensaries in the districts increased by twenty-three. A small decline in the number of in-patients was attended by a considerable increase in the number of out-door patients. The attendance of women was slightly better than in 1902, owing doubtless to the attention paid in recent years to the provision of suitable accommodation for them. A satisfactory feature of the year is the fact that subscriptions and donations increased by nearly $1\frac{1}{2}$ lakhs of rupees. **Mufassal Dispensaries.**

84. The total number of lunatics under treatment during the year was the highest on record. More than one-half of the total number confined were criminal lunatics. **Lunatic Asylums.**

SANITATION.

85. The improvement of the water-supply in the districts is a subject which received much attention during the year. The quality rather than **Water-supply.**

the quantity of the supply having been ascertained to be in fault, local officers were requested to direct their efforts chiefly to improving the sources of supply and removing the causes of contamination; and a promise was given that if in any case the local authorities would contribute one-third of the cost, and the public another third, Government would contribute the remaining third up to a limit of Rs. 5,000 for any one district, and of Rs. 50,000 for the whole Province. These conditions were imposed with the object of encouraging the people to help themselves, and of fostering a spirit of co-operation between them and Government.

Septic Tanks.

86. A small Committee under the presidency of the Inspector-General of Civil Hospitals was appointed to enquire into and report on the advantages of the septic tank system with special reference to existing installations. The report of the Committee was submitted to Government at the close of the year 1904.

VACCINATION.

Vaccinating staff.

87. There was an increase of five Inspectors in Calcutta. Proposals for the reorganisation of the Vaccination Department are now under consideration by Government.

CHAPTER VII.

INSTRUCTION.

Administration.

88. Various measures of far-reaching importance for the improvement of education were carried out during the year, the most important of which were:—

(1) The opening of training classes for Hindu and Muhammadan widows and school-masters' wives so as to enable them to become teachers in girls' schools.

(2) The extension of the system of appointing zanana teachers for women and girls of respectable family and position who are prohibited by the custom of the country from appearing in public.

(3) The steps taken to improve the training schools for teachers of primary schools and to increase the number of such schools.

(4) The preparation of a comprehensive scheme for developing, and making grants-in-aid to, the indigenous Muhammadan primary schools which exist throughout the Province.

Statistics.

89. Education made good progress during the year; there being an increase of nearly 4 *per cent.* in the total number of educational institutions and of nearly 8 *per cent.* in the number of pupils attending them. The expansion of primary schools was well maintained; but there is still only one school to every three villages in the Province, and the need for further development is year by year more keenly felt. The education of females made good progress during the year; the number of girls' schools having increased by 36·5 *per cent.* and the number of pupils attending them by 28·1 *per cent.* Encouraging as these results are, the

proportion of female students to the total number of girls of a school-going age (2·8 *per cent.*) is still insignificant; and the need for patient and continued effort and for the loyal co-operation of the Hindu and Muhammadan communities remains undiminished. There was a further satisfactory improvement in respect of the education of Muhammadans, the number of Muhammadan pupils having increased by 11·7 *per cent.* It is hoped that this hopeful sign indicates a real and lasting awakening on the part of the Muhammadan community to the advantages of education.

REFORMATORY SCHOOLS.

90. The number of admissions to the two schools at Alipore and Hazaribagh fell from 156 to 107, this figure being the lowest recorded in the last four years. This result is ascribed to the fact that Magistrates have, as instructed by Government, been careful to enquire whether misdemeanants could not in many cases be more suitably dealt with under the alternative provisions of the Criminal Procedure Code and Reformatory Schools Act relating to youthful offenders. The efforts made to train the boys in the trades of their castes, as also to trace the subsequent careers of discharged boys, still leave much room for improvement. A satisfactory feature of the year was the development of the system of licensing out boys sentenced to terms of imprisonment to private employers. **Reformatory Schools.**

LITERATURE AND THE PRESS.

91. The literature published in Bengal and the attitude of the Press during the year do not call for any special comment. **Literature and the Press.**

CHAPTER VIII.

ARCHÆOLOGY.

92. The restoration of the ruins at Gaur and Pandua was nearly completed, and much conservation work was done at the Black Pagoda at Kanarak. **Work of the year**

CHAPTER IX

MISCELLANEOUS.

VETERINARY DEPARTMENT.

93. The total number of veterinary dispensaries in existence at the end of the year was 22. The growing popularity of these institutions is again illustrated by the increase in the number of animals under treatment at the hospitals; but the most satisfactory feature of the year's work is the increase from 21,439 to 60,151 in the number of cases treated in the villages by itinerant Veterinary Assistants. **Work of the year.**

PART II.



THE REPORT.

REPORT FOR THE YEAR 1903-1904.

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.—PHYSICAL AND POLITICAL GEOGRAPHY.

CHAPTER II.—ADMINISTRATION OF THE LAND.

CHAPTER III.—PROTECTION.

CHAPTER IV.—PRODUCTION AND DISTRIBUTION.

CHAPTER V.—REVENUE AND FINANCE.

CHAPTER VI.—VITAL STATISTICS AND MEDICAL SERVICE.

CHAPTER VII.—INSTRUCTION.

CHAPTER VIII.—ARCHÆOLOGY.

CHAPTER IX.—MISCELLANEOUS.

MAP.

ADMINISTRATION OF BENGAL, 1903-1904.

CHAPTER I.—PHYSICAL AND POLITICAL GEOGRAPHY.

For—

PHYSICAL FEATURES OF THE COUNTRY, AREA, CLIMATE AND CHIEF STAPLES.

HISTORICAL SUMMARY.

FORM OF ADMINISTRATION.

CHARACTER OF LAND TENURES; SYSTEM OF SURVEYS AND SETTLEMENTS.

CIVIL DIVISIONS OF BRITISH TERRITORY.

DETAILS OF THE LAST CENSUS, TRIBES AND LANGUAGES.

See—

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION REPORT FOR 1901-1902, PART II, PAGES 1—160.

Changes in the Administration.

1. There were no administrative changes of major importance made during the year. Such changes as occurred will be found detailed in the Chapters dealing with the branch of administration to which they relate.

Relations with Tributary States and Frontier Affairs.

SIKKIM.

Area, 2,818 miles; chief products, timber, rice, wheat, barley, maize and cardamoms; population, 59,014; revenue, Rs. 1,51,837; present Maharaja, Thutop Namgyal, born 1860; family of Tibetan origin, residence Gangtok; has male heir, Sidkyong Tulku.

2. The rainfall of the year was about the average of the past three years. There were no severe hail storms, and the maize crop was in consequence a bumper one. Cultivation was to some extent interfered with by the demands for coolies in connection with the Tibet Mission, but this must have been in no small degree compensated for by the good wages obtained by coolies and the high prices fetched by the maize crop owing to large demands from the Commissariat Department. The cardamom crop was below the average. The apple orchards at Lachung and Lachen did very well, and good prices for the crop were obtained. The Weaving School at Lachung continued to prosper. A consignment of smelted copper sent to England in the previous year realised so small a profit that no further consignments have been sent. Ten thousand sleepers were sold to the Darjeeling-Himalayan Railway at a good profit. An inspection of the State Forests by a Government Forest Officer had to be postponed, owing partly to the prolonged absence from the State of the Political Officer, who was unable to arrange to meet the Forest Officer to be deputed. There were no epidemics, and public health was good throughout the year. The hospital and dispensary at Gangtok and the dispensary at Chidam did good work during the year. The Maharaj Kumar's residence was finished early in the year, and is now occupied by him. The police lock up at Gangtok has been finished, with the exception of the compound wall, which was not taken in hand on account of the scarcity and

dearness of labour. No new roads were constructed and very little was done to existing roads by the State, as all available labour was taken for the road and transport work necessitated by the Tibet Mission. The Maharaj Kumar during the year rendered much assistance in the Transport arrangements in connection with the Mission. The total value of the trade with Tibet fell from Rs. 19,09,832 in the previous year to Rs. 7,49,188.

BHUTAN.

Area, roughly, 20,000 square miles; estimated population, 250,000.

3. Our relations with Bhutan continued friendly throughout the year. No successor to the Deb Raja has so far been appointed.

COOCH BEHAR.

Area, 1,307 square miles; chief products, rice, jute and tobacco; population, 566,974; revenue, Rs. 23,28,653; military force, 193 men and four field guns; present Maharaja, Nripendra Narain Bhup; family of Tibetan or Dravidian origin; residence, Cooch Behar; has male heir, Maharaj Kumar Raj Rajendra Narain.

4. During the year the State Council held 21 sittings on its Judicial side, and 40 on its Legislative and Executive sides.

An Act to amend the Cooch Behar Civil Procedure Code, a Stamp Act, a Vaccination Act, and a Registration Amendment Act were passed.

The general condition of the State during the year appears to have been entirely satisfactory. The damage done by the earthquake has now been entirely remedied, except as regards the drainage of Cooch Behar town. There seems little doubt that the alteration of the levels has seriously affected the health of the town, and there is reason to fear that it will be further affected by the deviation in the course of the Torsa river. The Council are fully alive to the importance of this matter, and steps are being taken to obviate the injury as far as possible; but this involves much expense, and any scheme will have to be carried out gradually. The early rice was a fair, and the late rice an excellent crop. The outturn of tobacco and jute did not exceed 10 and 12 annas respectively. A shortness of the former crop was, however, to a great extent compensated for by a rise in price. There were no epidemics during the year, and public health was on the whole good. At the nine dispensaries maintained by the State there were 971 in-patients. The number of out-patients increased from 26,316 to 29,159; nearly 11 per cent. of the total number of patients were females. The actual revenue of the State for the year was Rs. 23,28,653: expenditure amounted to Rs. 23,01,384. The collections under Land Revenue rose from Rs. 13,46,912 in the preceding year to Rs. 13,54,479. Collections of Excise Revenue exceeded the average of the previous five years by Rs. 12,549, and there was an increase in the Stamp Revenue of Rs. 2,615. The gross earnings of the State Railway rose from Rs. 1,24,741 to Rs. 1,42,540, and the line gives promise of being a really profitable investment. Expenditure on 'Public Works' amounted to Rs. 1,25,116: of this sum, Rs. 58,627 were spent on original works and Rs. 30,074 on repairs. It was decided during the year that there should be two separate buildings for the Victoria College and the Jenkins' School. For the latter bricks to the value of Rs. 16,682 were manufactured. Rupees 13,437 were spent from the Communication Improvement Fund on the construction of iron bridges, on which tolls will be collected. There was little serious crime during the year. An unsatisfactory feature of the administration of criminal justice was the small percentage of Sessions cases which ended in conviction, which was only 10·34. The expenditure on police amounted to Rs. 53,702: the discipline of the force does not appear to be altogether satisfactory. The average daily jail population was 81·49, and the net cost of each prisoner Rs. 80-6-2. There was a decrease in the number of civil suits instituted from 7,778 to 6,231: this is ascribed to the introduction with effect from the 1st April 1903 of the new Stamp Act, which led suitors to institute a large number of suits in the last quarter of the previous year, in order to evade payment of the increased duties prescribed by the new Act. The number of deeds registered fell from 10,158 to 9,670. The total expenditure on education was Rs. 43,779. The year witnessed the introduction of the new System of Primary Education prescribed in Bengal, and as in previous years education

Chap. I. PHYSICAL AND POLITICAL GEOGRAPHY.

received much attention in the State. During the year an interesting and useful publication entitled the "Cooch Behar State and its Land Revenue Settlements" was issued. The book furnishes a detailed report on the survey and settlement operations which commenced in 1885 and were finally concluded in 1899-1900, and also contains a general account of the State and its people.

HILL TIPPERA.

Area, 4,086 square miles; chief products, rice and cotton; population, 173,325; revenue from State, Rs. 8,16,958 and from zamindari in British territory, Rs. 8,68,581; military force, 330 infantry; present Raja, Radha Kishore Deb Barman Manikya, born 1857; family, Indo-Chinese; residence, Agartala; has male heir.

5. Towards the close of the year an heir was born to the Jubaraj, the heir-apparent. Kumar Brajendra Kisore joined the Imperial Cadet Corps, and two other Kumars were sent to the Rajkumar College at Ajmere. The rainfall of the year was well distributed, and as a result the paddy and cotton crops were excellent, good prices were obtained, and the material condition of the people who are agricultural was in consequence most satisfactory. Public health was also good. The collections of revenue amounted to Rs. 8,16,958. An increase of Rs. 1,15,408 over the previous year's figures was principally contributed by "Tax on cotton and oil-seeds," the result of the bumper crops of the year, and by "Tax on Forest produce" due to resettlement of certain mahals. There was an increase in the area of waste lands settled, and reclamation is going on steadily. Eliminating the opening balance and deposits of the year, the total gross receipts of both the State and the Chakla were Rs. 17,18,172, and the expenditure Rs. 15,52,085.

The administration of the year appears on the whole to have been satisfactory, though the responsible officers of the State do not spend sufficient time on tours in the interior.

The results of the trials of criminal cases show an improvement, but there is still a high percentage of acquittals. The average daily population in the seven jails maintained by the State was 47·46. The health of the prisoners was good. The objectionable practice of hiring out prisoners for labour has been discontinued. Ten charitable dispensaries with a hospital attached to each were maintained as in the previous year. They were attended by 35,269 out-door patients. The new Victoria Memorial Hospital erected at Agartala is a spendid building, and the arrangements in it and its equipment excellent. Seven thousand seven hundred and fifty-six persons were vaccinated during the year. The number of primary schools increased from 63 to 88, and the Thakur Boarding School continued to do good work.

TRIBUTARY AND POLITICAL STATES OF CHOTA NAGPUR.

Consisting of nine States—Bonai, Changbhakar, Gangpur, Jashpur, Kharsawan, Korea, Seraikela, Sirguja and Udaipur, varying in size from 6,089 square miles (Sirguja) to 153 square miles (Kharsawan).

Total population 1,001,429. None of the States have a military force of their own, but the subordinate tenures are of a feudal nature.

6. As in the previous year the administration of the States of Udaipur, Bonai and Kharsawan was, owing to the minority of their Chiefs, carried on, under the Commissioner's supervision, by managers appointed by Government. In Gangpur the criminal and civil administration of the State was conducted by a member of the Provincial Executive Service, deputed by Government for the purpose, except for 2½ months when he was on privilege leave; during his absence the Chief carried on the administration himself. In order to obtain the *data* on which to base a more satisfactory system of supervision of the several States than has been possible in the past, Government arranged to depute during the cold weather of 1904-1905, an officer of the Indian Civil Service to tour through the States and report broadly on the general tendencies of the administration in each. During the year under report a civilian was appointed to settle boundary disputes between the State of Udaipur and certain States under the Central Provinces administration. The work is being continued during the cold weather of 1904-1905. Orders have issued for the inception of settlement operations under the supervision of the Director of Land Records in the States of Seraikela and Kharsawan. Extradition rules for the pursuit and arrest of

Administration.

absconding offenders were adopted by the several States towards the close of the year.

Revenue and expenditure.

7. The total revenue from the several States amounted to Rs. 7,72,590, an increase of Rs. 21,483 over the previous year's figures. Increases in the case of some of the States are said to be due to greater accuracy in the accounts submitted. A large increase in Gangpur is chiefly due to considerable sales of timber. The number of excise shops in the several States was largely added to during the year, and as a result the excise revenue increased by Rs. 31,636. In some of the States the number of shops appears to be excessive, and instructions for a reduction in their number have been issued. The stamp duties were introduced in the Gangpur State with effect from October 1903, and brought in a revenue of Rs. 2,117. The total expenditure on the construction and repairs of roads was Rs. 1,168, and on other public works Rs. 44,620. These figures do not, however, represent the actual cost incurred, as a good deal of labour expended was free or remunerated otherwise than by money payments. In one or two States no work at all seems to have been taken up.

Police and Criminal Justice.

8. There was an increase of 46 in the number of police employed, and a rise in the expenditure on police purposes from Rs. 37,729 to Rs. 43,445. Besides the salaried staff employed, there are village chaukidars and goraits who are remunerated in kind or by grants of land. The total number of cases brought to trial was 2,633 with 4,590 persons, as against 3,261 cases, with 5,580 persons in the preceding year. Of the cases for disposal, only 144 were pending when the year closed. The total amount of fines imposed was Rs. 8,340, of which Rs. 6,773 were realised. There were 23 commitments to the Commissioner sitting as a Sessions Court. In 17 the offence charged was murder. Fifty-two criminal appeals were disposed of by the Commissioner: in 39 the orders of the Lower Court were confirmed.

Jails.

9. The number of prisoners confined in the several jails during the year was 1,364. The health of the prisoners in all the jails except Korea was good. There was as in the previous year a large number of escapes. Though improvements are being gradually effected, the arrangements for the accommodation and custody of prisoners seem unsatisfactory in many of the States.

Civil Justice.

10. The total number of civil suits for disposal was 1,125, of which 140 were pending at the close of the year. The civil case-work was, as in the previous year, heaviest in Seraikela, Gangpur and Kharsawan. The Commissioner disposed of 104 civil and revenue appeals: in 63 the orders of the lower courts were confirmed.

Education.

11. The number of schools in the States increased from 84 to 89, and of pupils from 2,254 to 2,966. There was a satisfactory increase of 300 in the number of aboriginal pupils. The total expenditure on education was Rs. 11,707. The minor Chiefs of Udaipur and Kharsawan are being educated at the Raipur College, and special arrangements have been made for the education of the heirs in some other States.

Medical.

12. Dispensaries are maintained in all the States except Korea and Changbhakhar. The number of out-door patients treated was 17,033. There was an increase of 7,957 in the number of vaccination operations performed.

Public health and material condition of the people.

13. The rainfall of the year was good and more evenly distributed than in the previous year. Crops were excellent in most of the States, and the price of rice fell or remained stationary in all. No epidemics occurred in any of the States, and public health was good everywhere except in Udaipur, where fever was severe. The material condition of the people was generally satisfactory.

TRIBUTARY MAHALS OF ORISSA.

Consist of the seventeen States of Athgar, Athmallik, Baramba, Boad, Daspalla, Dhenkanal, Hindol, Keonjhar, Khandpara, Moharbhanj, Narsingpur, Nayagarh, Nilgiri, Pal Lahera, Ranpur, Talcher and Tigiria. Their area varies from 4,243 square miles (Moharbhanj) to 46 square miles (Tigiria). Total population 1,947,802. All pay tribute. Most of them maintain militias and a few have guns.

Administration.

14. No change occurred under administration during the year under review. Shortly after its close, the State of Narsingpur was, on the Chief attaining his majority, released with certain restrictions from the direct management of Government. Settlement was in progress in Baramba, Moharbhanj and Nayagarh. In Baramba it has practically been completed, and the new rents are being realised. In Moharbhanj measurement of three parganas

was completed; as also the assessment of another pargana which brought in an increase of revenue from Rs. 7,787 to Rs. 18,560. In Nayagarh the progress made was not considerable.

Revenue and expenditure.

15. Collections were satisfactory, except in Narsingpur, in the five States under Government management, especially in Dhenkanal and Pal Lahera. In the Narsingpur State collections improved from 63 to 70 per cent. There was a considerable decrease in the number of deeds registered, and in the fees realised. This result is ascribed to the good harvests of the year. The value of stamps sold rose from Rs. 57,470 to Rs. 67,004. The income from Excise was practically the same as in the previous year. A decrease in the receipts from country spirit and opium was balanced by an increase in the receipts from ganja and toddy. During the year under review prospecting for minerals was carried on in Moharbhanj with promising results. Experiments were also made in sericulture, which bids fair to be a successful enterprise. Rupees 2,41,274 were spent on Public Works in the several States during the year. The largest amounts expended were in Moharbhanj (Rs. 64,903) and Dhenkanal (Rs. 45,578). Eighty-three miles of new roads were made during the year, making a total length of 1,159 miles. Keonjhar shows the greatest activity in this respect, having made 43 miles of new roads. In the States under Government management except in Nayagarh the results were not satisfactory, as large amounts of the sanctioned grants were allowed to lapse.

Police and Criminal Justice.

16. The police force employed in the several States practically underwent no change. The decrease in crime noticed in the previous year continued: it is ascribed to the material prosperity of the people. The results of trials were fairly satisfactory, the percentage of those convicted to persons sent up for trial being 52·2 per cent. The results of sessions trials were on the whole satisfactory. The total fines imposed were Rs. 24,208, of which Rs. 17,959 were realised.

Jails.

17. There was a decrease in the number of admissions to the several jails from 2,463 to 2,006. Deaths, however, rose from 12 to 40, the result of cholera in several of the jails. There were several cases of escape, and there seems much room for improvement in jail administration in these States as in those of Chota Nagpur.

Civil Justice.

18. There was a considerable decrease in the number of civil suits instituted, the decrease being very marked in Dhenkanal.

Education.

19. The number of schools in existence rose from 1,319 to 1,356 and of pupils from 19,137 to 23,296. There was a marked increase of 888 in the number of aboriginal pupils. The results of the several examinations at which pupils appeared were satisfactory. The total expenditure on Education was Rs. 1,19,902, of which Government contributed Rs. 19,895.

Medical.

20. The number of dispensaries in existence remained the same as in the previous year. The total number of patients treated at them rose from 103,861 to 112,869. There was a corresponding increase in expenditure from Rs. 29,571 to Rs. 33,866. Vaccination, though better than in the previous year, was not altogether satisfactory; the training class attached to the Cuttack Medical School continued to work satisfactorily, and 21 students passed out successfully during the year.

Crops, public health and material condition of the people.

21. The year was undoubtedly a favourable one in respect of weather and crops. The rainfall was seasonable and well distributed, and the paddy, *rabi* oil, tobacco and sugarcane crops were all good or excellent. In one pargana of Moharbhanj alone was any loss of crops reported.

Public health was not good during the year under report. Cholera in an epidemic or sporadic form appeared in all the States except Talcher, which however suffered from small-pox. The greatest mortality from small-pox occurred in Hindol, Narsingpur, Nayagarh and Baramba. In spite of the unhealthiness of the year, the material condition of the people may be said to have been satisfactory, in view of the bumper harvests reaped.

Condition of the People.

(Report on the Land Revenue Administration of the Lower Provinces for 1903-1904.)

Prices of food and labour.

22. The good harvests of the year lowered the price of most of the principal food-grains, except in Birbhum, Murshidabad, Monghyr, the Sonthal

Parganas, Ranchi and Manbhum, where common rice was dearer than in 1902-1903. Prices rose high in Nadia for all sorts of food-grains, and in the Patna Division they were high from July to October, especially for wheat and common rice, owing to the lateness of the rains, but as soon as the early October rain improved the prospects of the standing crops prices fell. In Orissa, common rice was considerably cheaper than in any other year since 1898-1899. In Monghyr and Malda, there was a rise in the price of wheat, and of barley in Ranchi, and very slightly in Bhagalpur also. In Birbhum, Bankura, Monghyr, and Malda the price of gram was high, while in Chittagong it was very nearly the same as in 1902-1903. The price of maize, which is a staple food of the poor in the Bhagalpur Division, fell in all the districts of the Division. There was an appreciable fall in the retail price of salt throughout the province owing to the reduction of the duty upon it. The fall in the districts of Noakhali and Chittagong was also due to the breaking up of the monopoly of local vendors by a European firm which imported salt direct from Hamburg.

23. As in the previous year, wages remained stationary, except in Midnapore, Nadia, Murshidabad, and Pabna; in Khulna, Rajshahi, Dinajpur, and Noakhali there were slight fluctuations. In Midnapore, the wages of labour fell considerably owing to the cessation of railway construction. In Nadia the wages of domestic servants rose by 16 per cent., and in Murshidabad, those of labourers also rose in consequence of a demand for labour for the Ranaghat-Murshidabad Railway. The same want was felt in Pabna, and the wages of coolies were considerably above the usual rate. The wages of labour in the Dacca Division, especially in Mymensingh, are always high. The rate of wages showed a tendency to rise in Monghyr, and in the Gumla subdivision of Ranchi, owing, in the latter case, to the construction of a large number of houses by persons wishing to settle there.

Material condition of the people by Divisions—Burdwan.

24. In the Burdwan Division, the cultivating classes were not altogether prosperous during the year, and there was more or less failure of the staple crop in many areas. Labourers fared yet worse. Owing to the short outturn of the crops the occupations of many in thatching and rice-husking were greatly restricted, while the completion of railway work in Bankura and Midnapore removed a large field of employment. The coal trade was also dull in Burdwan. It is remarked that there was a great demand for water for irrigation purposes, and a widely expressed wish for the extension of the Eden Canal system, which, under existing conditions, cannot irrigate much more than half of the area commanded by it.

Presidency.

25. In the 24-Parganas and Jessore, the condition of the people generally improved with better harvests, though in the latter district the sugar industry is declining, and lands have deteriorated by the cessation of floods from the Ganges. A new industry, the curing and preparation of tobacco, has been started on a small scale in the Jhenidah subdivision. In Khulna the crops in some portion of the Sundarbans were damaged by late rains. The Ranaghat-Murshidabad Railway provided work for those who needed it in Nadia and Murshidabad: in the latter district, a failure of the winter rice crop in Kandi was met by loans and by work on roads and tanks.

Rajshahi.

26. In the Rajshahi Division, the harvests were on the whole favourable, and the material condition of the people good. In Bogra the gradual extension of jute cultivation to the contraction of rice was very marked. The year was not favourable to traders owing to the early closure of river traffic.

Dacca.

27. In the Dacca Division, the year was on the whole a prosperous one, and there was no material change in the condition of the people.

Chittagong.

28. In Tippera cultivation extended. The weaving industry in the Brahmanbaria subdivision is reported to be gradually decaying. The people of Noakhali were as a rule well off. The number of labourers who possess no land at all for cultivation was very small, and wages were high. In Chittagong, the effects of the cyclone of 1897 have almost disappeared, and the people of the southern part of the district are now generally prosperous. The protective works undertaken by Government in the Cox's Bazar subdivision during the year benefited the inhabitants of a large tract. The Maghs in Cox's Bazar who are mostly merchants on a small scale are, however, said to be becoming poorer owing to their lazy habits.

29. In the Patna Division, the bulk of the population is agricultural and gained by the good harvest. On the other hand great suffering was caused by plague in the southern districts, and cholera and fever were disastrous in Champaran, where 18,000 died of the former disease, and 45,000 of the latter. Patna.

30. In the Bhagalpur Division, the condition of the people was on the whole fairly prosperous, the food supply being sufficient. There was, however, no extension of industries. The cultivation and manufacture of indigo are being curtailed every year. In Monghyr and Bhagalpur, people were grievously affected by a serious outbreak of plague. Cholera and small-pox also broke out over the greater part of the Banka subdivision during the hot weather months. Bhagalpur.

31. Owing to the unusually good harvest and low prices of the year, the material condition of the people in the Orissa Division was on the whole prosperous, except in certain areas in Balasore which suffered from insufficient rain. Orissa.

32. In Hazaribagh there was an excellent *bhadoi* harvest, and plenty of work in the mines and on the Gaya-Katras Railway. In Ranchi, Manbhum, and Singhbhum, the condition of the people was generally good, but in Palamau, owing to deficient rainfall, the *bhadoi* crop was not much more than half the normal yield. The outturn of *til* was, however, excellent and saved the district. The early October rain was favourable to *rabi* crops and loans under the Agriculturists' Loans Act were distributed to the extent of Rs. 1,00,000, exclusively in those villages which had had no rice crop at all. The largest advances were in Parganas Kothi and Pundag, for *rabi* sowings, to the extent of Rs. 35,000, but the crop was not a success, owing to the entire absence of winter rain. In some areas, the railway which brought in *rabi* seeds in unlimited quantities and enabled the *til* to be exported, alone saved the people from a famine. The zamindars have taken in Government loans about Rs. 46,500 during the current year for works of irrigation, which the Deputy Commissioner hopes will undoubtedly secure an enormously increased outturn in all ordinary years. The long strain of bad seasons made no less than 15 landlords apply for protection under the Encumbered Estates' Act. Chota Nagpur.

CHAPTER II.—ADMINISTRATION OF THE LAND.

Realisation of the Revenue.

[Report on the Land Revenue Administration of the Lower Provinces for 1903-1904.]

33. An account of the year's demand, collections and balances of land revenue will be found under Chapter V.—"Revenue and Finance." The paragraphs below give details as to the mode of realisation of the revenue, and information as to matters connected with the administration of land revenue, not treated of elsewhere in the Report.

Remittances of land revenue, cesses and rent by means of money-orders.

34. The number of revenue money-orders increased to 253,849 against 239,954 in 1902-1903, but the amount covered by them fell from Rs. 23,35,051 to Rs. 22,92,810. Both variations seem to indicate that the system is growing in popularity among the proprietors of petty estates. The increase in the number of money-orders was also probably effected by the reduced fee for sums of Rs. 5 and under, and in some districts of the Patna Division by the fear of infection from plague at district head-quarters. The average value of each order was Rs. 9-0-6 against Rs. 9-11-8 in the preceding year. The remittances exceeded a lakh of rupees in each of the districts of Dacca, Mymensingh, Faridpur, Chittagong and Shahabad. Separate forms for land revenue and for cesses have been introduced with effect from the 1st April 1904. It is hoped that this will reduce the number of sales of estates due to mistakes in filling up the forms.

Payment of rent by money-order has been authorized in all parts of the province, except the districts of Darjeeling, Cuttack, Balasore, Angul, the Sonthal Parganas, and the districts of the Chota Nagpur Division. The system appears to be popular both with landlords and tenants in the Chittagong Division, and in particular in the Chittagong district, where the percentage of orders refused by the landlords was as low as 1·3, but elsewhere it is generally made use of by tenants who have disputes with their landlords and seek to avoid the payment either of their just dues or of illegal exactions. The percentage of refusals which, except in the Chittagong Division, was nowhere in Bengal and Bihar under 20, and which in Champaran rose to 53, is an index of the extent to which payment by money-order was objected to by the landlords. The total number of money-orders in the province increased from 67,030 in 1902-1903 to 69,660 in the year under review. There was a large increase of nearly 2,500 in the Patna Division (where it indicates less friendly relations between landlords and tenants), but this was to some extent counterbalanced by decreases in the Burdwan, Presidency and Dacca Divisions, where the relations of landlords and tenants are more amicable. The system was very little resorted to in the Puri district of Orissa to which it has been extended, as only seven money-orders for the sum of Rs. 72 were issued for rent during the year. In the Chota Nagpur Division, though the system is not in force, rents sent by money-orders are accepted in the Government khas mahals.

Coercive processes.

35. As in previous years, the revenue sale law was worked with moderation and discretion; and, although the number of defaults in the payment of Government dues increased by 754, the number of sales declined by 34. A large decrease (79,463) in the number of certificates filed having occurred in the year 1902-1903, it is not surprising to find that there has been a substantial increase (22,086) in the number of such cases during the year under report. The number of cases disposed of during the year exceeded the number instituted by 1,316, or by ·75 *per cent.*; and the Certificate Department was efficiently administered.

Land Registration.

36. The total number of interests in land registered in the province since the Act came into force was 1,598,685 at the close of 1902-1903. The mutations allowed during the year were 72,676, or a percentage of 4·5 on the actual number of interests. The pecentage was highest in the Chota Nagpur

Division (8·4), and lowest in the Chittagong Division (2·2). The numbers of old interests removed and of new interests entered were 83,528 and 99,673 respectively. Thus the total number of interests at the close of the year was 1,614,830. The total number of applications for mutation for disposal was 99,651, out of which, 80,776 were disposed of. The expenditure on account of land registration charges during the year amounted to Rs. 40,771, as against Rs. 34,057 in the preceding year. The fees realised amounted to Rs. 5,846. The number of appeals or applications for revision presented to the Board of Revenue under section 85 was 25.

The Registers prescribed under the Act were generally in good condition. A Bill to amend the Act with the object of improving the maintenance of these registers will shortly be introduced into the Bengal Legislative Council.

Separate accounts. Registration of tenures under Act XI of 1859.

37. At the end of the year there were 1,04,775 separate accounts paying a revenue demand of Rs. 97,36,891. There were 49 registrations of tenures for their protection against annulment in case of the sale of the estate under Act XI of 1859 for arrears of revenue. The total number of tenures thus protected is 5,294. They comprise a total area of 5,207,839 acres with a total rental of Rs. 30,20,408.

Partitions.

38. The number of partitions effected during the year was 384 as compared with 321 in the preceding year: of these 260 were in the Patna Division. Disposals during the year exceeded institutions. The average cost per acre of partitions completed during the year varied from Rs. 9-4-3 in Burdwan to Re. 0-2-2 in Champaran. The new Estates' Partition Act continued to work smoothly.

Land acquisition.

39. Land acquisition proceedings covering an area of 8,486 acres of land required by Government, Municipalities, District Boards, Railways, etc., were confirmed by the Board of Revenue during the year, at a total cost of Rs. 29,73,472 as compared with an area of 18,042 acres, costing Rs. 28,91,316 taken up during the preceding year. Of the total expenditure incurred during the year, over 14 lakhs were on behalf of railways, over 9 lakhs on behalf of Government (including irrigation projects) and over 5 lakhs on behalf of Municipalities. The average cost per acre of the lands acquired, for which the proceedings were confirmed during the year, was Rs. 350, the corresponding figure in the preceding year having been Rs. 160. The increase in the average cost was due to a number of costly projects in Calcutta, in which lands were acquired together with the buildings on them, and in which the cost per acre of the land and buildings varied from Rs. 10,245 to Rs. 7,50,000. The number of proceedings under the Act pending at the end of the year was 392, as compared with 359 at the close of 1902-1903.

Advances under Act XIX of 1883 and Act XII of 1884.

40. The loans granted during the year under the Land Improvement Loans Act amounted to Rs. 1,39,992, as against Rs. 1,24,869 in the preceding year. The largest advances were made in the districts of Palamau (Rs. 46,449), Gaya (Rs. 18,850), Burdwan (Rs. 13,295) and the Sonthal Parganas (Rs. 12,512). The amount for recovery during the year was Rs. 1,18,624. Total collections amounted to Rs. 80,271, and remissions to Rs. 15,578, the percentage of collections on realisable demand being thus 67·6 against 66·3 in the previous year.

Rupees 2,21,977 were advanced under the Agriculturists' Loans Act during the year. A sum of Rs. 1,82,863 was realisable, collections amounted to Rs. 1,37,158 and remissions to Rs. 2,524, the percentage of collections on realisable demand being 75 against 74·5 in the preceding year.

Co-operative Credit Societies.

41. Twelve new Co-operative Credit Societies were established during the year, viz., 7 in Government estates, 2 in Wards' estates and 3 in private estates. The total number of such societies actually working at the close of the year was 58, of which 26 were in Government estates, 16 in Wards' estates and 16 in private estates. The amounts advanced to these societies were Rs. 4,300 from Government funds, Rs. 600 from the Court of Wards' funds, and Rs. 3,037 from private sources. The most successful societies appear to have been those established in the Sankara Ward's estate in the Sonthal Parganas where they are reported to have been of great benefit to the people. The recent appointment of a Registrar under the Co-operative Credit Societies Act (X of 1904) will doubtless give a great stimulus to the development of these societies.

Miscellaneous.

42. The cases in the Collectors' Business statements instituted and disposed of, were 1,010,536 and 1,052,162 respectively. The file of pending cases was still further lightened by the disposals continuing to exceed the number of cases instituted. The decrease was mainly under the heads of Cess Revaluation, Miscellaneous cases, notices of transfer under sections 12—18, Bengal Tenancy Act, Land Registration and Income-tax objections. On the other hand, Excise and Land Acquisition cases, applications for loans and waste lands, and execution cases all increased. The process work was slightly less, but the correspondence work was much greater.

Surveys and Settlements.

[The information given in this Chapter for the larger Survey and Settlement operations, under the control of the Superintendent of Provincial Surveys and the Director of Land Records, is for the year ending 30th September 1903, and taken from the Survey and Settlement Reports for the year 1st October 1902—30th September 1903. The information given for minor operations, not under the control of the Director of Land Records, is for the year ending 31st March 1904, and taken from the Board's Land Revenue Administration Report for 1903-1904.]

MAJOR OPERATIONS.

Work of the year.

43. Survey and settlement operations were in progress during the year in eighteen districts contained in eight of the nine Divisions of this Province. The districts were:—Patna, Gaya, Darbhanga, Shahabad, Sonthal Parganas, Bhagalpur, Monghyr, Purnea, Ranchi, Hazaribagh, Singhbhum, Darjeeling, Hooghly, Noakhali, Backergunge, Murshidabad, Rangpur and Midnapore. The programme, which was considerably larger than in the previous year, was generally carried out; while, in the few cases in which deficiencies occurred, the reasons given for the failures were satisfactory. The area covered by the traverse survey parties was 6,884 square miles, and was 2,713 square miles in excess of that dealt with in the previous year. Cadastral survey operations extended over 3,719 square miles, as against 3,357 square miles in the year 1901-1902. A record-of-rights has now been framed in respect of 32,482 out of a total area of 151,185 square miles of British territory in the Province.

The settlement of rents in the Damin-i-Koh Government Estate in the Sonthal Parganas was completed during the year; the result being that the rents of the last settlement were enhanced by 50 *per cent.* for the first five years, and by 62 *per cent.* for the remaining period of the new settlement. Under a declaration made by Government in the year 1823, the lands held by the Paharias, which lie within the limits of this estate, cannot be assessed to rent without their consent; and hence no compulsion has been put upon these people to apply for settlement. The hillmen have, however, begun to realize that settlement proceedings will have the effect of protecting them from encroachments by the Sonthals, and 111 Paharia villages were settled during the year on voluntary application.

In Ranchi the attitude of the Mundas towards the operations which are being conducted in that district was friendly, and there is good evidence that the results in deciding land disputes and preventing litigation are appreciated. In pargana Surjapur, in Purnea, the inhabitants were very favourably disposed towards the operations, which have been undertaken there for the purpose of settling disputes between landlords and tenants, and the people in adjoining areas expressed their desire for the extension of the operations beyond the pargana referred to.

Cost rate of survey and settlement.

44. Marked success attended the various measures of economy introduced by the Superintendent of Provincial Surveys, in the working of his Department during the year. In Backergunge, where there are peculiar difficulties to contend with, the cost per square mile of traverse survey amounted to Rs. 43·6, as against Rs. 61·9 in the previous year; and the cost of cadastral survey, with preliminary records, was Rs. 167·7, as compared with Rs. 273·3 in the year 1901-1902. In Ranchi, where, owing to the poverty of the country and the people, it is specially important that the work should be done as cheaply as possible, the traverse survey was carried out at a cost of only Rs. 28·9 per square mile, as against Rs. 60·5 in the year 1901-1902; while the cost of cadastral survey and initial record-writing was only Rs. 94 per square mile. In Purnea the cost of traverse survey was only Rs. 24·3 per square mile; the care with which the preliminary demarcation was supervised on

behalf of the Darbhanga Raj, was one of the causes which contributed to this good result.

MINOR OPERATIONS.

45. Minor surveys by non-professional agency were conducted in connection with petty settlements throughout the Lower Provinces, except in Orissa, the most important being in the 24-Parganas, Nadia, Murshidabad, the Sundarbans, Jalpaiguri, Pabna, Dacca, Mymensingh, Faridpur and Tippera.

Minor settlements under the Bengal Tenancy Act were conducted under the supervision of Commissioners of Divisions over an area of 153,566 acres contained in 362 villages within Government and resumed estates. The total expenditure amounted to Rs. 47,961. The greater portion of the area under settlement lay in the 24-Parganas, Murshidabad, Khulna and Tippera, the work being in various stages of progress.

Land Records.

[Settlement Report for 1902-1903.]

46. The statistics relating to the Mutation offices established under the Land Records Maintenance Act, III (B. C.) of 1895, emphasise the conclusion previously arrived at, that the Act has proved a failure. The schemes, submitted to the Government of India for the maintenance of the records in North Bihar, Orissa and Chittagong, are still under the consideration of that Government. There are indications of improvement in the record of mutations of names in Government and Wards' Estates. In some cases, however, the work is still unsatisfactory, and the Board of Revenue have been requested to pay continued attention to this important subject.

Reports show that the settlement records and maps are now being more largely utilised in general district administration. The work of maintaining boundary marks as an effectual system has only just begun, and the progress made cannot yet be profitably criticised.

Waste Lands.

[Report of the Board of Revenue on the Land Revenue Administration Report for 1903-1904.]

General.

47. A Committee appointed by Government met in December 1903 to discuss the future administration of the Sundarbans and resolved that (1) a survey should be made and a record-of-rights prepared for the Backergunge portion of the Sundarbans by the Settlement Officer of that district; (2) a settlement of land revenue should be made of such estates in that area as fell in for settlement during the period of the operations; (3) the leasing of land to capitalists, whether large or small, should be stopped, and the Sundarbans reclaimed by settlement with actual cultivators on a *raiyatwari* basis. The old system was condemned on three principal grounds: (I) that it caused a heavy loss of revenue; (II) it afforded no adequate control over the landlords, and (III) it encouraged the custom of sub-infeudation, by which middlemen are introduced between the original grantee and the cultivator. It has now been decided that the post of Commissioner in the Sundarbans established by Regulation IX of 1816 should be abolished by the repeal of that Regulation; and that the work hitherto done by the Commissioner should in future be performed by a Deputy Collector or Deputy Collectors working under the immediate supervision of the Collectors of the districts of the 24-Parganas, Khulna and Backergunge, in which the Sundarbans are situate.

Sundarbans.

48. There were 115 leases current in the 24-Parganas and Khulna Sundarbans granted under the rules of 1853, covering an area of 380,464 acres with an eventual maximum revenue of Rs. 1,10,607. The present revenue of these grants is Rs. 1,00,055. Twelve such grants comprising an area of 93,616 acres with a present income of Rs. 22,256 and an eventual maximum revenue of Rs. 26,624, were transferred during the year from the jurisdiction of the Commissioner in the Sundarbans to that of the Collector of Backergunge. During the year 4,169 acres were leased in the Sundarbans to large capitalists. The eventual maximum revenue will be Rs. 2,385. No lease was granted in Saugor Island during the year.

Applications for waste lands, surveys, etc., in the Sundarbans.

49. There were 47 applications during the year for waste lands in the Sundarbans, against 87 in the previous year. These, together with the two applications pending at the close of 1902-1903, were disposed of during the year. The total area surveyed in the districts of the 24-Parganas and Khulna was 91,299 acres, against 110,334 acres in the preceding year. The record-writing and plans or maps for the area were prepared within the year, except those of a few estates which have since been finished. The Commissioner surveyed in addition to his ordinary duties 13,819 acres of land in Chur Mir Mahamed Ali, Part I, in the district of Noakhali, which the Collector proposed to settle under the waste land rules, and completed the map. Altogether 30 settlements covering an area of 25,192 acres with an eventual maximum revenue of Rs. 35,221, were made, resulting in an accession of revenue to Government of Rs. 12,710. The number of settlements pending at the close of the year in the 24-Parganas and Khulna portions of the Sundarbans was 108. Twenty-one were in the former, and 87 in the latter district. Fourteen of the pending settlements in the 24-Parganas related to the leasing of land to large capitalists, and have since the close of the year been struck off the file. Out of the 87 cases in Khulna, survey and khanapuri were completed during the year in 72 and attestation in 49. Two sales of leases were effected with an area of 4,169 acres, as compared with 29 sales in the previous year with an area of 60,641 acres. They fetched Rs. 9,708, against Rs. 1,08,596 in 1902-1903. The average price per acre was Rs. 2-5-3, against the upset price of one rupee.

Jalpaiguri District.

50. In Jalpaiguri the area leased for ordinary cultivation was 18,401 acres, and for tea 2,957, of which the eventual revenue will be Rs. 9,270 and Rs. 2,218, respectively. The areas leased up to the end of the year for ordinary cultivation and for tea, respectively, were 241,061 and 260,291 acres, with an ultimate revenue of Rs. 1,52,052 and Rs. 1,93,884. The number of applications for waste lands pending from the previous year in the district was 3,654, covering an area of 145,544 acres, and that received during the year under report was 1,954 with an area of 53,181 acres, making a total of 5,608 applications with an area of 198,725 acres for disposal. Of these 3,740 cases, comprising an area of 153,321 acres, were disposed of during the year, and the remaining 1,868, covering an area of 45,404 acres, were pending at its close.

Government Estates.

[Report on the Land Revenue Administration of the Lower Provinces for 1903-1904.]

Number and management of estates.

51. The total number of estates under direct management during the year was 3,266, of which 273 belonged to private individuals, the remainder being the property of Government. Forty-three estates, with an area of 1,541 acres, were sold during the year. There was no material change made during the year either in the managing agency or in the mode of management. The percentage of the cost of management on the current demand was 7·1, against 6·9 in the preceding year. Serious irregularities brought to light by the inspection of the accounts of Government estates were few.

Collections.

52. In estates held direct by Government the total collections were over 100 per cent. of the current demand, and the balance outstanding at the close of the year was much smaller than at the end of the preceding year. The current collections were below the fixed standards in twelve districts, while the balances were large in nine districts. The explanations furnished in these cases were, however, satisfactory.

Expenditure on improvements.

53. The expenditure incurred on miscellaneous and sanitary improvements in Government estates during the year amounted to Rs. 2,23,488, as against Rs. 2,30,041 in the previous year. Of this amount, Rs. 30,611 were spent on tanks and wells; Rs. 78,361 on drainage, irrigation and embankments; Rs. 13,795 on roads and bridges; and the rest on works of a miscellaneous nature. Out of the total sum (Rs. 2,57,767) allotted for works of improvement, Rs. 37,279 remained unexpended at the close of the year, as against Rs. 11,960 in 1902-1903. Special reasons, however, account satisfactorily for the greater part of the amount which lapsed.

Condition of raiyats.

54. The condition of the raiyats in the Government estates throughout the Province was generally prosperous. The Palamau Government estate

has for several years past suffered from failure of crops; but the Board of Revenue and the local officers have done all that lay in their power both to alleviate distress to and to encourage the construction of protective works.

Wards' and Attached Estates.

[The Report of the Board of Revenue on Wards' and Attached Estates in the Lower Provinces for the year 1903-1904.]

55. The Court of Wards had under its management 154 estates with a total current demand of Rs. 82,14,583, as against 139 estates with a total current demand of Rs. 96,27,610 in the year 1902-1903. The decrease in the demand is mainly due to the fact that many of the estates which were taken in charge during the year under review are small properties; whereas several large estates, including the Burdwan Raj estate and that of Babu Gopal Lal Seal, were released in the previous year. **Number of estates under management.**

56. The total payments on account of revenue and cesses due to Government represented 95·2 *per cent.* of the aggregate demand, while the corresponding figure for the year 1902-1903 was 99·5 *per cent.* The falling off in the percentage is chiefly due to the fact that several new estates, the previous management of which had not been satisfactory, have only lately been taken under the control of the Court. For a similar reason, there has been a considerable decline in the payment of rent and cesses due to superior landlords, the percentage on the total amount due being only 65·8, as against 79 in the year 1902-1903. **Payment of revenue, rent and cesses.**

57. The total collections of rent and cesses due to estates under management represented 101·2 *per cent.* on the current demand, as against 104·6 *per cent.* in the previous year. The falling off occurred chiefly in the Presidency and Orissa Divisions, where several new estates came under the charge of the Court and the collections suffered owing to the fact that the papers received from the proprietors were inaccurate and incomplete. **Collection of rents and cesses.**

The total uncollected balance due to estates under management, though less by Rs. 11,47,867 than that remaining at the close of the previous year, amounted to Rs. 52,04,066, or 66·3 *per cent.* of the current demand of the estates.

58. Although the payments (Rs. 40,34,569) made during the year in liquidation of debts exceeded those made in the previous year by Rs. 24,59,688, the balance at the close of the year amounted to Rs. 1,68,24,599, as against Rs. 1,08,35,961 at the close of the previous year. The increase in the balance is attributable to the heavy liabilities of some of the estates lately taken under management. **Debts.**

59. The cost of management, which had increased in the year 1902-1903 by a little over 2 *per cent.* upon the current demand, showed a further slight increase of ·1 *per cent.* On the other hand, there has been a very satisfactory reduction of charges in connection with the management of the Hatwa Raj estate, viz., from 16·4 to 11·2 *per cent.* **Cost of management and expenditure on improvements.**

The total expenditure on works of improvement and schools and dispensaries amounted to Rs. 3,30,060, the percentage on the current demand (about 4 *per cent.*) being about the same as in the year 1902 1903. The question of establishing demonstration farms in selected districts, to be maintained from the funds of estates owned by Government and managed by the Court of Wards, is under the consideration of the Board of Revenue.

60. The education of the wards received due attention in the case of all estates administered under Act IX (B.C.) of 1879. As regards the children of proprietors of estates taken over under the Chota Nagpur Encumbered Estates Act, matters appear to be less satisfactory. It has been suggested that powers should be given to the authorities under the Encumbered Estates Act to give compulsory education to the heirs of encumbered proprietors, since without education they may be no improvement upon their fathers, and may like them mismanage their estates as soon as released to them. The Board of Revenue have accordingly been asked to report whether they recommend an amendment of the Act referred to. **Education of wards.**

Revenue and Rent-paying Classes.

[Report on the Land Revenue Administration of the Lower Provinces for 1903-1904, and Divisional Annual Miscellaneous Reports for 1903-1904.]

Relations between landlords and tenants.

61. Except for some friction in parts of the districts of Howrah, Birbhum and Midnapore, the relations between landlords and tenants in the Burdwan Division were generally satisfactory. In the Presidency Division the relations were generally good in the districts of Murshidabad, Khulna and the 24-Parganas; but in the Diamond Harbour and Basirhat subdivisions of the last named district some ill-feeling was caused by attempts on the part of certain landlords to enhance rents or to realise illegal cesses. In the Nadia district the relations between several of the zamindars' and their tenants were strained. In the district of Jessore matters were much the same, and a gomasta of one of the local zamindars was murdered because of the oppression exercised by him. There was no open breach between landlords and tenants in the Rajshahi Division, and their relations are described as generally peaceful, though illegal cesses, illegal enhancements of rent, and fines are still common. In the Dacca Division the relations continued unchanged and were on the whole satisfactory, though in three cases in the district of Mymensingh the raiyats combined to resist the demands of the landlords. With a few exceptions the relations between landlords and tenants in the Chittagong Division were satisfactory as in the previous year. In the four districts north of the Ganges in the Patna Division, which have recently been dealt with under Chapter X of the Bengal Tenancy Act matters have practically settled down, except in the district of Darbhanga where attempts were made in certain large estates to nullify the settlement records by agreements or compromises extorted from submissive raiyats. As regards the other districts of the Division disputes were frequent and often serious in the Barh subdivision of Patna, and the local officers are reported to be anxious to have the area surveyed and settled under the Bengal Tenancy Act. In the district of Gaya also affairs were not altogether satisfactory, and punitive police had occasionally to be requisitioned to keep the peace. In the Bhagalpur Division matters on the whole remained much the same as in the previous year, though some temporary friction has been caused by the survey and settlement proceedings which have either just been completed or are still in progress. In the Orissa Division landlords and tenants continued to be on good terms except in some parts of the district of Balasore. Ranchi is the only district of the Chota Nagpur Division where the relations between landlords and tenants continued markedly strained. To improve matters it has been decided that the survey and settlement proceedings orginally undertaken in respect of the Munda country only should embrace the whole district. Some ill-feeling is also reported from Palamau and Singhbhum.

Working of the Bengal Tenancy Act.

62. It seems generally agreed that though, since the passing of the Bengal Tenancy Act, landlords and tenants alike have become better acquainted with their rights and duties, the time has come when defects in the Act, which have been discovered since its last amendment, should be remedied, and further power be taken to prevent attempts to nullify the record-of-rights, and the illegal enhancement of rents. This question is now engaging the attention of Government.

Rent-suits.

63. In the Orissa Division the number of rent-suits showed a further increase during the year under review, being 25,125, as against 23,014 in the previous year. This result was chiefly due, as explained in last year's Report, to the fact that, owing to the enhancement of the revenue at the last settlement, landlords cannot afford to allow arrears to remain outstanding for so long as formerly, and that the settlement records make it easy for zamindars to prove their claims in Court.

Rent-suits in the Chota Nagpur Division declined from 7,394 in 1902-1903 to 6,285 in the year under report. The decrease in Ranchi was due mainly to the recent amendment of section 123 of Act I (B.C.) of 1879, which, by facilitating the sale of tenures for arrears of rents, has made the tenure-holders more punctual in the payment of their rents.

CHAPTER III.—PROTECTION.

Legislating Authority.

See—
GENERAL ADMINISTRATION REPORT FOR 1901-1902, PART II.
PAGES 179—181.

Course of Legislation.

Acts passed during 1903-1904.

64. Four Acts were passed by the Bengal Council during the year 1903-1904.

Bengal Act V of 1903.

Bengal Act V of 1903 [*The Chota Nagpur Tenancy (Amendment) Act, 1903*]. This Act which received the assent of the Viceroy and Governor-General, on the 21st September, 1903, is intended to amend the Statute law relating to landlord and tenant in the Chota Nagpur Division, except the district of Manbhum, that law being contained in the Chota Nagpur Landlord and Tenant Procedure Act (Bengal Act I of 1879) and the Chota Nagpur Commutation Act, 1897 (Bengal Act IV of 1897).

Bengal Act I of 1904.

Bengal Act I of 1904 [*The Bengal Tramways (Amendment) Act, 1904*].—The object of this Act, which received the assent of the Viceroy and Governor-General on the 27th February, 1904, is to enable promoters and any local authority (such as a body of Municipal Commissioners) to provide, in any agreement for the construction of a tramway, that the local authority may postpone beyond the ordinary term of 21 years the exercise of their right to purchase the tramway.

Bengal Act II of 1904.

Bengal Act II of 1904 (*The Bengal Public Parks Act, 1904*).—This Act received the assent of the Viceroy and Governor-General on the 1st March, 1904, and is intended to provide a procedure for the introduction of statutory rules for the regulation of public parks in Bengal.

Bengal Act III of 1904.

Bengal Act III of 1904 (*The Bengal Settled Estates Act, 1904*).—This Act received the assent of the Viceroy and Governor-General on the 4th March, 1904, and is intended to make provision in special cases approved by Government for preserving the continuity of noble and influential families whose estates are not protected by the existing law from division on the decease of the proprietor.

Amendments in the Rules of Business.

65. Certain amendments in the Rules for the Conduct of the Legislative Business of the Bengal Council were also passed during 1903-1904, and have received the assent of the Lieutenant-Governor. The amendments had for their object the removal of difficulties experienced in practice.

The Bengal Salt Bill, 1898.

66. *The Bengal Salt Bill, 1898* [to amend the Salt Law in Bengal] which was introduced and read in Council on the 23rd April, 1898, has been withdrawn under the orders of the Lieutenant-Governor.

The Bengal Excise Bill, 1903.

67. This Bill has been further amended by the Select Committee, and the amended Bill, together with the further Report of the Committee, was circulated to Members of Council on the 15th April, 1904. The object of the Bill is to consolidate and amend the Bengal Excise Law, which is now contained in the Bengal Excise Act, VII of 1878, as amended on different occasions by five Acts, viz., Act IX of 1885, Act XIII of 1890, Bengal Act IX of 1881, Bengal Act I of 1883 and Bengal Act II of 1903. The Bill is mainly a consolidating measure, and accordingly re-enacts large portions of Bengal Act VII of 1878, as amended from time to time.

The Bengal Local Self-Government (Amendment) Bill, 1904.

68. This Bill was introduced and read in Council on the 26th March, 1904. Its object is to make various amendments in the Bengal Local Self-Government Act, III of 1885 for the following purposes, namely:—

(*1*) to give legal authority to the practice now already in existence under which District Boards incur expenditure on Veterinary objects;

to impose tolls on newly-constructed bridges until the initial cost and the capitalised value of the cost of maintenance and renewal have been recovered;

(3) to give power to levy a rate to enable District Boards to pay sums guaranteed by them by way of interest on capital expended on railways or tramways; and

(4) to remove certain flaws and omissions in the Act which experience of its working has brought to light.

Police.

[The Report on the Administration of the Police Department for the year 1903; Judicial and Administrative Statistics of British India, Section VII.]

Strength of Force.

69. There was no change in 1903 in the sanctioned strength of the superior staff of the police force. Neither the superior staff nor the subordinates are sufficient for the police work to be done in this Province. Some progress was made during the year in replacing head-constables by Sub-Inspectors. The recruitment of these officers continues, however, to present difficulty, so much so that in the Northern and Western Range the number of qualified candidates who appeared at the competitive examination was not equal to the number of vacancies. About half only of the candidates recruited last year were obtained by competitive examination. With regard to the future recruitment both of the superior staff and of Sub-Inspectors, Government will, it is hoped, be able before long to announce revised rules.

Training of Police officers.

70. The training of probationary police officers both of the superior and subordinate ranks at the Bhagalpur Training School received much attention during the year, the course of training has been made longer, and efforts have been made to render it more practical.

Additional and Special Police.

71. During the year 293 additional police (officers and men) were entertained under section 15, Act V of 1861. They were almost all employed to prevent breaches of the peace. One thousand five hundred and five persons were appointed as special police under section 17, Act V of 1861, chiefly with the object of preserving the public peace during the festivals of the Bakr-Id and the Maharram.

Expenditure on Police.

72. The total expenditure on police during the year was Rs. 54,90,780.

Discipline.

73. Judged by the return of punishments inflicted, the conduct of the police force in 1903 was, on the whole, satisfactory; judicial and departmental punishments both show a gratifying decrease, the figures being the lowest of the past decade. Charges of torture against the police were 19 as against 8 of the previous year; of these, 15 were declared false, and in no case was a conviction obtained under a graver section than 323, Indian Penal Code (causing hurt). Charges of extortion decreased as compared with preceding years; and punishment was inflicted judicially or departmentally only in 12 cases.

Town Police.

74. The Inspector-General reports unfavourably on the work of the town police generally, and more especially with regard to the town chaukidars. There is little doubt that in towns these latter are unsuitable substitutes for constables, whose work they are really doing. All the advantages of the chaukidari system are lost when, as in many of the Municipalities in Bengal Proper as distinguished from Bihar, the so-called chaukidars are foreigners and wholly without local knowledge; while, at the same time, they have frequently as hard work to do as ordinary constables, but are paid less, less efficiently trained, and less supervised. Where the available force for night duty is so small that the arrangement of the beats does not permit the town police officer to have at least one night in bed after two nights on duty, it is hopeless to expect efficient work and difficult to punish bad work. Relief may sometimes be given in the re-arrangement of the beats and by concentration of the available force on particular points. Government has, in the main, accepted the conclusion of the Inspector-General that the employment of town chaukidars should be discontinued, and regards the replacement (more or less gradually) of this class of men by constables throughout the Province, save in those so-called towns which are really villages, as a necessary reform.

River Police.

75. The report of the Inspector-General shows that as at present constituted the River Police force is insufficient to cope with the crime committed on the rivers of the Province; a scheme for the reorganisation of this force is awaited.

Chaukidari Police.

76. The importance of continuous attention to the administration of the village watch cannot be exaggerated, and it is gratifying to hear from the Inspector-General that the village police are steadily improving. The improvement is largely attributed to the appointment of daffadars. The importance of proper control of the village police and of their proper recruitment, the careful selection of the village panchayets and treatment of them with tact and consideration are all essential to the successful administration of this force. The present head of the Government regards the development of village government as probably the most important reform to be carried out in this Province, and an experienced officer has been placed on special duty during the cold weather of 1904-1905 to examine the subject in all its bearings.

The remarks made by Government last year as to the necessity for limiting the number of chaukidars to strict requirements, and for taking opportunities, such as those afforded by vacancies, for reducing and amalgamating charges do not appear to have generally attracted the attention of Magistrates and District Superintendents, for the total number of village chaukidars was increased during the year by 1,440 men. The total annual emoluments of the whole force of 153,185 chaukidars are shown to amount to nearly 79½ lakhs; that is, a chaukidar on an average receives Rs. 4-4 a month. Only 5,348 of the chaukidars are remunerated by *chakran* lands. The sum of the taxation is considerable though it does not represent as much as two annas a head for the rural population; and it is imperative that the number of chaukidars should not be unduly increased. It is even more necessary that the tax should be fairly assessed, so that it may not be burdensome on the poor. This is one of the matters which will be fully considered in the course of the examination of the subject by the special officer referred to above.

Rewards to Chaukidars.

77. The total amount paid in rewards to chaukidars fell from Rs. 62,813 to Rs. 60,072; but this decrease is due to the fact that rewards for regular attendance at the thanas have been largely discontinued. The fact that the average reward for the whole Province was only about Rs. 3-8 indicates that there is still a tendency to fritter away the resources of the Reward Funds in petty rewards rather than to concentrate them on substantial rewards for really good work. There are still some districts where the total amount paid in rewards was very small. In Jessore with 4,084 chaukidars only Rs. 624 was distributed in rewards, while in Chittagong, where there are 2,446 chaukidars, only Rs. 109 was distributed. In Pabna, on the other hand, with 2,332 chaukidars, and with a large balance at the credit of the Reward Fund, Rs. 6,343 was distributed. An examination of the statement of the receipts and disbursements of the District Chaukidari Reward Fund discloses anomalies which seem to show that in certain districts the Chaukidari Act is not enforced as it should be. Thus the credits to the Reward Fund under sections other than section 38 of the Act were in Murshidabad only Rs. 12-2-8, in Jessore only Rs. 14-11-6, and in Bhagalpur nothing at all. The receipts under this head in Muzaffarpur amounted to Rs. 1,946. *Primâ facie* it would appear that in the three districts first mentioned care is not taken to see that the Chaukidari Reward Fund is credited with the fines realized from defaulters under section 27 of the Act. The attention of Magistrates has been called to this matter.

Statistics of crime.

78. The total number of cognizable offences reported has been practically stationary for the last three years; an increase last year under the heads of offences against property and against the person is nearly balanced by a decrease under the head of offences against the public tranquillity and in the number of offences against special laws.

False cases.

79. Out of 178,436 cognizable offences reported, 4,915 were declared by Magistrates to be maliciously false; but in only 11·5 per cent. of the false cases was prosecution of the complainant ordered. The difficulty of obtaining a conviction for bringing a false charge and the necessity for caution on the part of the trying Courts in dealing with the evidence in such prosecutions are

admitted. Excessive caution, however, should not operate unduly to restrict the prosecution of persons when there is good ground for believing that this grave offence has been committed. In the district of Monghyr, in which the largest number of cases declared false was reported, viz., 262, only 13 prosecutions of complainants were instituted, and in Gaya only 17 prosecutions in 258 false cases. From these figures it would appear either that the police were far too ready to return cases as false or that the district authorities showed over-caution in directing prosecutions. The gravity of the offence is not always rightly apprehended, as in one case a Magistrate considered it sufficient to sentence an offender who had brought a false charge of dacoity to two weeks' rigorous imprisonment. The gross inadequacy of the sentence was corrected on a retrial before the Sessions Judge, who sentenced the offender to three years' rigorous imprisonment.

Abstention from enquiry.

80. The percentage of cases in which the police availed themselves of the provisions of section 157, Criminal Procedure Code, to abstain from enquiry is nearly the same as in 1902, being 35 in the case of burglaries and 21·2 in the case of thefts. Discreet abstention from enquiry by the police in unimportant cases in which the person injured does not desire that there should be enquiry is to be encouraged. Because, however, an offence is not enquired into it does not, therefore, cease to be of interest from the police point of view; and an offence which is not investigated should not be treated as a routine entry. The judicious examination and collation of the reported offences, whether investigated or not, calls for a police officer's best intelligence. A succession of reported offences against property from the same neighbourhood should at once attract the attention of the police and of the Magistrate.

Criminal Investigation Department.

81. The newly-developed Criminal Investigation Department worked most successfully during the year in bringing to justice large gangs of dacoits in Purnea and Bankura and directed numerous arrests in other districts, including arrests of gangs of criminals from the Upper Provinces who have long made plundering raids in Bengal. It is hoped that this Department will be much strengthened in the near future.

Riots, dacoities, etc.

82. In examining the detailed figures for the serious crimes of the Province, two general tendencies can be detected. The first of these is the gratifying decrease in the number of riots, which is the least on record since 1881. The number of such cases tried by the Courts was 2,228 as compared with 2,452. This decrease may reasonably be attributed to proper use of the preventive sections of the Criminal Procedure Code. The other tendency, which is unfortunately very unsatisfactory, is the steady rise in the true cases returned under the heads Dacoity, Robbery and Cattle theft. The figures under the last two classes of crimes show an increase not only over the figures for last year, but also when compared with the averages for three periods of five years from 1887 onwards. Dacoities have increased from 346 last year to 361; and though this is below the average (375) for the five years, 1897—1901, it compares unfavourably with the average for the five years, 1887—1891 and 1892—1896, when the figures were 158 and 279 respectively. A portion of this increase may no doubt be attributed to better reporting. This, however, does not appear to be a complete or entirely satisfactory explanation. The crimes are not of a class in which suppression is easy save with the connivance of the police, and the increase is too decided in its tendency and spread over too long a period to be treated as due to merely temporary causes. With regard to cattle theft, which is very serious in its results to an agricultural community, the Inspector-General has been asked to examine the local incidence of the crime and the results of the attempts to deal with it. It is observed that the increase in serious crimes against property has not been followed by an increase in the use of section 110 of the Criminal Procedure Code. On the contrary, cases under this section have steadily diminished during the last seven years, the actual fall being from 4,854 cases in 1897 to 3,311 in 1903. The Inspector-General directly attributes the increase in the dacoities in the Birbhum district to neglect of the bad livelihood section. The number of bad livelihood cases instituted in this district, though greater than that of the preceding year, was far below that of districts where crime is less rife. The crimes of dacoity, robbery and cattle theft are often difficult to detect and more difficult to bring home in the Law Courts. Their frequent occurrence in any locality, however,

rarely fails to afford, on careful investigation, evidence of general repute of a nature which a police officer of experience would not fail to use. It is to the discreet use of section 110, with careful supervision so as to prevent oppression, to increased vigilance in the supervision of bad characters, and to the efforts of the new Criminal Investigation Department that Government confidently looks to produce a diminution of the serious crimes against property which are discreditable to the police administration of Bengal. The increase in the provincial percentage of cases of bad livelihood tried locally is satisfactory, but there is room for further improvement in this direction, as without local investigation the provisions of the section are liable to be abused and its object to be defeated.

Murders.

83. Murders show a slight decrease, there being 387 as against 398 in 1902. Forty-six persons were sent up for trial on charges of murder by poison, and no fewer than 39 were acquitted. Amongst "other murders" the Inspector-General mentions a case of human sacrifice which occurred in the district of Puri.

Coinage cases.

84. There were 131 cases relating to coins. The cases mentioned in the Police report show that the police were fairly successful in dealing with the actual coiners who are the persons to be aimed at, and that the Courts as a rule awarded exemplary punishment in cases where the crime was established.

Railway Police.

85. The number of cognizable cases found to be true by the Railway Police was 4,833, against 3,918 of the previous year. The increase is attributed to the fact that suspicious cases of missing goods are now treated as cases of theft. Notwithstanding the increase in the number of true cases, however, convictions have fallen. This would seem to show that the investigations in cases of missing goods have not been very successful. The successful result of the Jhanjha gang case, which was commenced in 1902 and ended in the conviction of 14 of the accused, who were members of a gang who committed thefts from running trains, will, it is hoped, check such crime on the East Indian Railway. Thefts of railway materials, a particularly dangerous and troublesome form of crime, show a considerable increase.

Remands.

86. Some improvement in the number of remands granted by the Courts in the disposal of police cases is noticeable. The percentage of cases disposed of at the first two hearings improved from 48·6 in 1902 to 51·2 in 1903. It is satisfactory to remark that in the district of Monghyr, in which delays were particularly noticeable last year, the percentage of disposals at the first two hearings has risen from 25·4 to 40·2. The district of Noakhali, which is one of the lightest criminal districts in Bengal, shows particularly poor results. Only 28·9 per cent. of the cases were disposed of at the first two hearings, while no fewer than 57 out of 380 A forms were remanded more than six times.

Reconvictions.

87. The percentage of reconvictions fell from 13·1 in 1902 to 12·7 in the year under reference. The percentage was very low in the case of Jalpaiguri, Midnapore, Ranchi, Khulna, Rangpur and Bankura.

Absconders.

88. The number of absconders on the Police Registers at the close of the year has decreased from 3,184 in 1902 to 2,818. The district of Dacca is still the worst in the Province in this respect, and the district of Noakhali again figures badly, returning no fewer than 100 absconders.

Suicides and accidental deaths.

89. Three thousand five hundred and seventy-two deaths were reported to be suicidal and 2,468 of those who committed suicide were women. Cuttack as usual heads the list with 370 cases, followed by Jessore 236, Nadia 235, Dacca 214, 24-Parganas 177. The disproportion between men and women is greatest in the Patna Division, where 417 women committed suicide against 35 men. Next comes Orissa with 437 women to 135 men. Deaths by accident numbered 31,656, of which 23,726 were due to drowning and snake-bite.

Mortality from and destruction of wild beasts and snakes.

90. The total number of persons killed by wild animals during the year was 1,120, of whom 359 were killed by tigers. The district of Singhbhum has since 1900 uniformly returned the largest number of such deaths: this year the number returned was 54. One hundred and ninety-eight persons were reported to have been killed by leopards, and 119 by wolves. The number of cattle killed by wild animals was 22,235, and the number of wild animals

* The information given in this paragraph is not taken from the Police Report, but from a separate report submitted to the Government of .

destroyed 5,643. The deaths of 10,394 persons were attributed to snake-bite. The largest number of such deaths occurred in the Patna Division and the smallest number in the Chittagong Division. As in the previous year no reliable figures as to the mortality of cattle from snake-bite are available. The total amount paid in rewards for the destruction of wild animals was Rs. 7,387-12. The number of licenses issued free of cost under the Indian Arms Act, 1878, for the destruction of wild animals and the protection of crops in force during the year was 2,041.

Police Administration in the Town of Calcutta.

[Report on the Police Administration of the Town of Calcutta and its Suburbs for the year 1903.]

Strength and discipline of force.

91. There was no change in the sanctioned strength of the force employed, but at the close of the year there was a large number of vacancies in the ranks of the constables. These vacancies the Commissioner ascribes partly to the fact that a constable's present pay compares unfavourably with what he can earn as a *darwan* in private employ, and partly to more strict supervision of the force, which has led to more work being required of them simultaneously with a decrease of illicit gains. Proposals for the increase of pay of the constables are under the consideration of the Government of India.

Judged by the increase in the number of dismissals from service of officers and men and by the large number of departmental punishments, the discipline of the force during the year was not as good as could be desired. The Commissioner has been asked to give his careful consideration to the matter of departmental punishments. There were 21 judicial convictions, but few of the offences charged were of a serious nature.

Statistics of offences.

92. The total number of cognizable cases reported during the year was 38,853, of which the large majority were as usual petty charges under the Calcutta Police Act, the Cruelty to Animals Act, and cases of public and local nuisances. The total shows an increase of 9,249 on the number reported during 1902, but is similar to the figures for the three years preceding 1901, when there was a sudden drop from 38,353 to 25,115 cases, which was attributed to abstention on the part of the police from dealing with public nuisances, and especially with cases of traffic obstruction, as the result of the severe strictures passed on their conduct in connection with the strike amongst carters and hackney-carriage drivers which occurred in Calcutta in that year. The number of cases instituted under the Police Act in 1903 was 11,979, which exceeds the figures for 1899 and 1900. The figures indicate that the Calcutta Police have recovered confidence in dealing with public nuisances, and it is hoped that under better supervision the force will keep the right mean between excess of zeal on the one hand and neglect of duty on the other.

After elimination of offences of a petty nature the statements show 6,125 cognizable cases reported in 1903, as against 4,926 and 5,221 in the two preceding years. Practically the whole of this increase is under the heads of theft and burglary cases, and is due, as the Commissioner of Police considers, to improved reporting. The explanation involves the conclusion that in previous years the reporting of these classes of offences must have been extremely bad. But it is observed that in spite of the large increase in the number of these cases reported to the police, the number actually brought to trial was smaller than in the preceding year. It is notorious that in Calcutta the serious crime against property is in great part committed by professional criminals, and there appears reason to fear that the increase is real and the result of greater activity on the part of the criminal classes, and less success on the part of the police in dealing with them. In this connection it is noticed that whereas in 1902, 299 cases of vagrancy and bad character were brought before the Courts, in 1903 this number fell to 203. It is hoped that these figures are not indicative of failure on the part of the police to take full advantage of the preventive powers conferred on them by law.

In the Courts the results of the cases sent up for trial by the police have been very satisfactory. Of the total number of police cases sent up, 97 per cent. ended in conviction. Of 93 cases coming before the Sessions, 82 ended in conviction; and in the theft and burglary cases in which arrests were made the percentage of convictions was high. The number of old

offenders reconvicted during the year was 749: of these, 57 were dealt with by the Courts of Sessions. More commitments of old offenders were made in the previous year, but having regard to the fact that of offenders reconvicted no fewer than 261 had four or more previous convictions against them, it is not clear that commitment was made by the Courts in all cases where it should have been.

The number of cases declared false has steadily increased during the last four years, and in 1903 rose to 167. In only 21 of these cases were prosecutions instituted; and in only 3 of the 11 cases in which the prosecution was brought to a conclusion was sentence of imprisonment imposed. Such results can have no deterrent effect against false accusations; and more frequent and thorough prosecution and more adequate punishment of persons who bring false charges are clearly required. The Police and the Magistrates have been asked to give more attention to this matter.

There was a falling off in the numbers of youthful offenders dealt with under the Reformatory Schools Act, and under section 562, Criminal Procedure Code.

The number of non-cognizable cases instituted before the Magistrates during the year fell to 13,669, as against 14,638 in the preceding year. There was a large decrease in the number of these cases pending at the close of the year.

Working of the Arms Act (XI of 1878).

93. There was an increase in the sales by licensed dealers of rifles, guns, revolvers and pistols. An increase in the number of rifles imported in recent years is ascribed to the manufacture of cheaper small bore rifles. Three prosecutions were instituted under the Act, all of which ended in conviction.

Working of the Fire-Brigade.

94. One hundred and twenty fires were reported during the year in the town and suburbs of Calcutta, and the fire-brigade was called out on 36 occasions. The total loss of property by fire is estimated at Rs. 16,90,092. The most serious fire of the year occurred at Ralli Brothers' Hydraulic Jute Press, where jute and machinery to the value of Rs. 14,00,000 were burnt.

European Vagrancy Act, IX of 1874.

95. Forty-eight vagrants were admitted into the Government Workhouse during the year. There were 9 in the workhouse remaining from the previous year, making a total of 57, as compared with 100 in the preceding year. Of the 57, 27 were discharged or released, 10 absconded, 6 were sent to jail for insubordination and one was deported. There were 8 inmates in the institution at the end of the year.

Miscellaneous.

96. There were 110 cases of suicide during the year: of these 42 were of females. In 46·3 per cent. of the cases, death was caused by opium. There were 371 accidental deaths: 30 persons were run over and killed by vehicles in the streets: 240 drivers were prosecuted for rash and negligent driving, of whom 21 were sentenced to imprisonment.

Criminal Justice.

[Report on the Administration of Criminal Justice in the Lower Provinces of Bengal for 1903; Judicial and Administrative Statistics of British India, Section IV.]

General.

97. There was no material change during the year in the number and constitution of the Criminal Courts of the Province. Three temporary additional Sessions Judges were employed for short periods during the year. There was an increase of 17 in the number of Stipendiary Magistrates and a decrease of 86 in the number of Honorary Magistrates. During 1903, work in the Courts of first instance was heavier than in the previous year, and a larger number of witnesses was examined. There was a slight decline in the Appellate work of Magistrates, and a slight increase of revisional work. In Courts of Sessions there was a slight increase in Sessions cases, a decline in the appellate work, and a slight increase in revisional work. In the High Court there was a slight decline in appellate work during the year, and a marked decrease in the number of applications for revision, and transfer.

Offences reported.

98. There were 303,459 criminal offences reported during the year; an increase of 4,399 on the figures of 1902. The increase was almost entirely under the figures of offences under Special and Local Laws, which numbered 102,262, offences under the Indian Penal Code (201,197) having remained practically stationary.

Including cases pending inquiry at the close of 1902, the number of cases found to be false, or in which complaints were dismissed, was 60,323, or 19·8 per cent. of the total number of offences reported during the year. Of the total in 1903, complaints were dismissed in 49,435 cases, and 10,868 cases were declared to be false after trial or inquiry.

Of the total number of cases under inquiry during the year, 244,722 were found to be true, and of these, 178,013 were brought to trial. Inquiries were pending at the close of the year in 13,420 cases.

ORIGINAL JURISDICTION.

Magistrates' Courts.

99. Of the total number of cases brought to trial, 32,479 were in the Courts of the Presidency Magistrates, and 145,534 in the Courts of Magistrates in the Mufassal.

COURTS IN CALCUTTA.

Presidency Magistrates, Calcutta.

100. The number of cases brought before Presidency Magistrates, including the Municipal Magistrate, was larger by 5,167 than in 1902. The number of cases under the Indian Penal Code was 5,756, or 401 more than in 1902, while cases under Special and Local Laws rose from 21,957 to 26,723. The increase under the former head is mainly due to the fact that there were 378 more prosecutions for offences against the public health. Prosecutions for offences against property decreased by 104, and those for offences against the person increased by 121. Of offences under Special Laws, cases under the Police Act rose from 9,152 to 12,282; under the Municipal Act from 7,241 to 7,775; and under the Act for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals from 3,098 to 3,793. Each of these Acts had in 1901 ceased to a great extent to be brought into operation; and the increases noted represent a partial reversion to previous conditions.

Before Presidency Magistrates, other than the Municipal Magistrate, 24,318 cases were disposed of during the year, of which 18,402 were before Stipendiary Magistrates, 2,660 before Honorary Magistrates sitting singly, and 3,256 before Benches. Of the total number disposed of, 60 were committed to the High Court, and the remainder were finally decided by Magistrates; 4,025 being under ordinary, and the remainder under summary, procedure. The number of witnesses examined was 20,823; an increase of 2,217 on the figures of the previous year.

The Courts of the Presidency Magistrates were inspected during the year by two of the Honourable Judges. It was found that the work coming before the two Stipendiary Magistrates was more than could be disposed of by them, and that cases which should have been dealt with by Stipendiary Magistrates had been made over in large numbers to Honorary Magistrates; that the Honorary Magistrates were, in many instances, not qualified to discharge their duties efficiently; that there was a lack of method in the distribution of work; and that the office establishment was insufficient. In consequence of these defects, delays in the disposal of cases had been frequent and protracted. Detailed remedies were suggested to Government, and a third Stipendiary Magistrate was appointed after the close of the year.

The number of cases brought before the Court of the Municipal Magistrate during the year was 8,164, of which 7,774 were cases under the Calcutta Municipal Act. The number disposed of was 8,197, of which 7,583 were decided under the summary procedure, and 135 cases remained pending at the close of the year.

Results of trials.

101. The aggregate number of persons under trial before the Presidency Magistrates, other than the Municipal Magistrate, was 31,848. Of the persons tried, 3,003 were acquitted or discharged, 28,626 were convicted, 12 persons died, escaped, or were transferred for trial to other Courts, 72 were committed to the Sessions, and 135 persons remained under trial at the close of the year. Of persons tried for offences under the Indian Penal Code, 5,539 were convicted, and 2,187 acquitted or discharged. The results of the trials of

cases of all kinds before each class of Magistrates during the year are shown below :—

	Acquitted or discharged.	Convicted.	Percentage of convictions.
Stipendiary Magistrates	1,326	21,886	94·3
Benches of Magistrates	1,085	3,497	76·3
Honorary Magistrates, sitting singly ...	592	3,243	84·5

Of the persons convicted, 1,439 were punished with rigorous imprisonment, the sentence in the case of 4 persons including terms of solitary confinement, 131 were punished with simple imprisonment, 25,525 with fine, and 195 with whipping. Forty-one of the persons sentenced to fine, and 64 of those sentenced to whipping, were so sentenced in addition to other punishments. Twenty-three sentences of imprisonment were, in the case of youthful offenders, commuted to detention in a Reformatory School. One thousand and sixty-five convicted persons were warned and discharged.

In addition to these punishments, 64 persons were required to furnish security for good behaviour, all of whom were imprisoned in default for terms not exceeding one year; 13 persons convicted of offences involving a breach of the peace were ordered to execute bonds to keep the peace; 31 persons were released on probation under section 562 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, and various miscellaneous orders were passed under Special Laws in the case of 281 persons.

Before the Municipal Magistrate, 8,953 persons were under trial during the year, of whom 8,141 were convicted, 641 were either acquitted or discharged, and 171 remained under trial at the close of the year. The percentage of convictions was 92·7. The number of witnesses examined was 3,917. Of the persons convicted, 4,237 were punished with fine, and the rest were ordered to comply with various requirements of the rules and bye-laws of the Corporation.

MAGISTRATES OUTSIDE CALCUTTA.

Magistrates outside Calcutta.

102. At the opening of the year, 4,998 cases were pending before Magistrates outside Calcutta, and 145,559 were brought to trial during the year, including references under sections 347 and 349 of the Code of Criminal Procedure. Of these, 146,110 were disposed of. There was a slight increase in the number of cases brought to trial, the total being 192 more than in 1902, but the number was considerably less than in 1900 and 1901. The increase in 1903 was chiefly in cases under special and local laws, and in cases of offences affecting the human body. There was also an increase in the number of cases of miscellaneous offences under the Penal Code, and of offences affecting public health, etc. On the other hand, there was a marked decrease in the number of offences against property. The number of cases pending at the close of the year was 4,314.

The disposals were distributed as follows :-

	Tried regularly.	Tried summarily.
District Magistrates ...	1,237	249
Subordinate Stipendiary Magistrates	71,598	32,660
Honorary Magistrates ...	16,555	1,700
Benches of Magistrates ...	9,786	12,199
Special Magistrates ...	51	...

Of the 1,237 cases tried regularly by District Magistrates, 38 were decided by them under special powers under section 34 of the Code of Criminal Procedure.

Results of trials.

103. Of the total number of cases shown in paragraph above, 1,807 were committed or referred to the Sessions and 144,303 were finally disposed of by Magistrates. In these latter, 209,308 persons were accused, this number being 4,332 in excess of that of 1902. Of the total, 121,874, or 58·2 per cent., were convicted and 87,434, or 41·8 per cent., were acquitted or discharged. Of persons tried for offences under the Indian Penal Code, 51,062, or 42·2 per cent., were convicted and 69,906, or 57·8 per cent., were acquitted or discharged.

Exclusive of persons mentally incapable of taking their trial, the total number of persons awaiting trial before Magistrates at the close of 1903 was

7,273, as compared with 9,111 of 1902. The number of persons in custody at the close of the year was 724, being 22 less than at the close of 1902.

The general result of trials before Magistrates of each class, was as follows:—

	Acquitted or discharged.	Convicted.	Percentage of convictions.
Benches of Magistrates ...	9,065	16,868	65·
Subordinate Stipendiary Magistrates	67,148	90,413	57·3
Honorary Magistrates ...	9,773	13,201	57·5
Special Magistrates ...	24	41	63·
District Magistrates ...	1,424	1,351	48·7

Of the persons shown as convicted above, the numbers tried summarily were, by Benches of Magistrates, 11,360; by Subordinate Stipendiary Magistrates, 33,888; by Honorary Magistrates, 1,642; and by District Magistrates, 808.

The mode of trial of the persons convicted, and the nature of the sentences passed, were as follows:—

	Appealable sentence.	Non-appealable sentence.
On Regular trial	51,371	23,305
On Summary trial	10,479	36,719

The sentences passed on persons convicted were as follows

Transportation		4
Imprisonment	Rigorous ...	23,701
	Simple ...	931
Fine	With imprisonment	3,292
	Without imprisonment	82,571
Whipping	Sole punishment	1,488
	Additional punishment	295

A term of solitary confinement was included in 552 of the sentences of rigorous imprisonment, and in the case of 45 youthful offenders, the sentence of imprisonment was commuted to detention in a Reformatory School. Three thousand nine hundred and thirty-eight persons were called upon to give security to be of good behaviour, 3,766 of whom were sentenced to terms of imprisonment not exceeding one year on failing to comply with the order; and 238 persons were released on probation under section 562 of the Code of Criminal Procedure. Against persons who had previously been so released, proceedings were subsequently taken in 66 instances, and 72 persons were convicted and punished. In addition to substantive punishments, 10,752 persons were required to execute bonds to keep the peace, of whom 1,865 were convicted of offences involving a breach of the peace.

Of the sentences of imprisonment imposed, 4,969 were for terms not exceeding 15 days; 15,447 for terms not exceeding six months; 7,831 for terms not exceeding two years; and 106 for terms exceeding two years.

There was a considerable decline in the number of sentences of whipping, the figures being 1,783 for 1903, against 1,961 for 1902.

The fines imposed aggregated Rs 7,08,702. The amount realized during the year was Rs. 6,37,778; and Rs. 76,589 out of the fines realized were paid as compensation to complainants.

Miscellaneous Proceedings under the Code of Criminal Procedure.

104. In addition to criminal trials, the following were the more important classes of work dealt with by Magistrates in the Mufassal during the year.

Proceedings under Chapter VIII of the Code to prevent a breach of the peace were taken in 3,963 cases, or 263 more than in 1902. In these cases 16,829 persons were involved. Of these, 8,887 were required to execute bonds to keep the peace in addition to the persons mentioned as having been similarly bound down on conviction. The number of persons dealt with under this chapter was, as usual, largest in Backergunge (4,989), Faridpur (2,092), Mymensingh (1,289) and Khulna (1,216). There was an increase in all these districts on the figures for 1902, particularly in Backergunge and Faridpur.

In 2,761 cases, 5,497 persons were called upon to show cause why they should not give security to be of good behaviour, and the orders were made absolute in the case of 4,198 of them. Of the latter, 4,026 failed to give the

required security, and were imprisoned in default, 260 after reference to the Court of Sessions under section 123 of the Code, and 3,766 under orders of Magistrates for terms not exceeding one year.

Proceedings for the abatement of nuisances under Chapter X of the Code were taken in 848 cases, and in the cases of 201 persons, a reference was made to a Jury under section 138 of the Code. The number of cases under Chapter XII of the Code involving questions of the possession of land, decided by Magistrates during the year, was 2,473, an increase of 69 on the figures of 1902.

Under section 250 of the Code, 994 complainants were ordered to pay compensation to accused persons. Proceedings for maintenance were taken against 852 persons, and orders were made absolute against 274.

Witnesses.

105. The number of witnesses examined in the Courts of Magistrates in the Mufassal was 476,974, as compared with 472,478 in 1902 and 483,840 in 1901. The number who attended and were discharged without examination was 163,712, or 25·5 per cent. of the whole number in attendance. The amount paid to witnesses on account of the expenses of their attendance rose from Rs. 47,759 in 1902 to Rs. 51,858 in 1903.

Of the total number in attendance, 498,578 (77·8 per cent.) were discharged on the first day; 102,722 (16 per cent.) on the second; 28,606 (4·5 per cent.) on the third; and 10,780 (1·7 per cent.) after the third day. The number of witnesses detained for more than three days was 460 short of the number so detained in 1902. The decrease is satisfactory.

COURTS OF SESSION.

Commitments, etc.

106. The number of cases committed or referred during the year was 1,807, or 29 more than in 1902. The number of cases disposed of, including pending cases of the previous year, was 1,774, being 86 less than in 1902. There were 261 cases pending at the close of the year. The number of commitments was largest in Backergunge, where it was 128.

Results of trials.

107. There were 4,405 persons, or 120 less than in 1902, under trial before Courts of Session during the year. The cases of 3,854 persons were decided, and 511 remained under trial at the close of the year. Of the 3,854 persons tried, 2,375, or 63·6 per cent., were convicted, and 1,354 were acquitted or discharged, and the cases of 125 persons were referred to the High Court under sections 307 and 374 of the Code of Criminal Procedure.

Punishments.

108. The following sentences were passed by Courts of Session during the year:—

Death		61
Transportation	For life	227
	For a term of years	165
Imprisonment	Rigorous	1,696
	Simple	8
Fine		125
Whipping		32

In the case of 67 out of the 1,696 persons sentenced to rigorous imprisonment, the sentences included terms of solitary confinement and in the case of four youthful offenders, sentences of imprisonment were commuted to detention in a Reformatory School. Additional punishments were inflicted upon 117 of the persons sentenced to fine, and on 23 of those sentenced to whipping. Besides the above, 260 persons were sentenced to rigorous or simple imprisonment 16 for terms not exceeding one year and 244 for terms between one year and three years) on failure to furnish security for good behaviour, and 14 persons who had been convicted of offences involving a breach of the peace, were required to execute bonds with sureties to keep the peace in addition to their substantive punishment.

Sentences of imprisonment were passed for the following terms:—

Not exceeding	15 days	8
	6 months	157
	2 years	390
	7 "	1,344
Exceeding	7 "	61

Fines to the amount of Rs. 18,660 were imposed by Courts of Session, as compared with Rs. 12,086 imposed in 1902. The total realizations of the year aggregated Rs. 4,307, as compared with Rs. 5,490 in 1902. The amount of fines realized and paid as compensation to complainants during the year was Rs. 1,150, as compared with Rs. 525 in 1902.

Jury trials. 109. The number of persons tried by Jury during 1903 was 1,060; and of the persons so tried, the Sessions Judge approved of the verdict of the Jury in respect of 922 persons, and disapproved of it in respect of 138. In the case of 64 persons, the Sessions Judge disagreed with the verdict so completely, as to consider it necessary for the ends of justice to make a reference to the High Court under section 307 of the Code of Criminal Procedure. The results of these references are given below under the head "Superintendence, Reference, and Revision."

Trials by Assessors. 110. Two thousand two hundred and ninety-eight persons were tried with the aid of Assessors during the year under review, with the result that in the case of 1,595 persons, the Sessions Judge concurred with the opinion of both the Assessors; in the case of 250, he differed from the opinion of one; and in the case of 453, he differed from the opinion of both Assessors.

Duration of cases. 111. The average duration of Sessions trials from the date of commitment to the date of decision was 44·1. This is a marked and satisfactory improvement on the results of previous years, and is the result of instructions on the subject issued by the High Court towards the close of 1901.

Witnesses. 112. The number of witnesses in attendance before Courts of Session was 28,012. Of these, 18,098 were examined, and 9,914 discharged without examination.

Of the total number in attendance, 12,708 (45·4 per cent.) were discharged on the first day; 7,921 (28·3 per cent.) on the second day; 4,006 (14·3 per cent.) on the third day; and 3,377 (12 per cent.) after the third day. These results are an improvement on the results of 1902 considering that a larger number of witnesses were examined in 1903 than in 1902. The amount paid to witnesses on account of the expenses incurred by them in attending Sessions trials was Rs. 37,368, as compared with Rs. 33,214 in 1902.

Commitments, etc., to the High Court. 113. Including 11 cases pending at the opening of the year, 62 cases came before the High Court for trial. Of these, 65 were tried during the year, and 8 remained undecided at its close.

Altogether 78 persons were tried, of whom 66 were convicted and 12 acquitted. The number of witnesses examined was 641, and the average duration of cases from commitment 32·8 days.

APPELLATE JURISDICTION.

High Court.

Appeals. 114. At the opening of 1903, there were 81 appeals pending before the High Court from sentences or orders of Criminal Courts. During the year, 992 appeals were preferred and 968 decided, leaving 104 pending at its close. One appeal abated on the death of the appellant.

Of the appeals against sentences preferred during the year, 851 were from Courts of Session, 111 from Presidency Magistrates, and 17 from Deputy Commissioners exercising special powers under section 34 of the Code of Criminal Procedure. Thirteen appeals were preferred by the Local Government against orders of acquittal.

Results of appeals. 115. There were 844 appeals against sentences of Courts of Session decided during the year. The orders of the Lower Courts were upheld in 707 instances, reversed in 41, and modified in 86. Ten cases were remanded for retrial.

Ninety-six appeals from the orders of Magistrates of the Presidency Town were decided during the year, the orders being approved in 90 cases, reversed in three, and modified in two. One case was remanded for re-trial. Fifteen appeals from sentences passed by Deputy Commissioners were decided during the year, the orders being confirmed in 13 cases, reversed in one, and modified in one.

The result of the appeals decided during the year as affecting individuals, was that the appeals of 1,204 persons were summarily dismissed under section 421 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, and that, in admitted appeals, sentences

on 248 appellants were confirmed, on 11 enhanced, on 129 reduced or altered and on 101 annulled. In the cases of 45, a new trial or further inquiry was ordered.

Thirteen appeals by the Local Government against orders of acquittal were decided during the year. In three cases the order was upheld, in six it was reversed, and four cases were directed to be re-tried.

APPELLATE COURTS SUBORDINATE TO THE HIGH COURT.

116. At the opening of the year, 228 appeals were pending before Courts of Session. During the year, 6,198 appeals were preferred and 6,219 decided, leaving 187 pending at its close. Twenty appeals were either transferred to other districts for hearing, or abated on the death of the appellants. The number of appeals preferred to Sessions Judges was less by 290 than in 1902. Sessions Courts.

In appeals decided by Sessions Judges during 1903, 9,883 persons were concerned. The appeals of 2,744 of these, or 27·7 per cent., were summarily dismissed; 3,787 appellants, whose appeals were admitted, were altogether unsuccessful; 1,158 obtained a reduction or alteration of sentence; and 2,034 were acquitted; in the case of 159 appellants, a new trial or further inquiry was ordered; and the case of one appellant was referred to the High Court for orders.

The proportion of persons whose appeals were wholly unsuccessful, successful in obtaining a modification of the original orders, and successful, was 66·1, 11·7, and 20·5 per cent., respectively. Of those concerned in admitted appeals only, the same proportions were 53, 16·2, and 28·4 per cent. Taking into account admitted appeals only, these results were slightly less favourable to appellants than those of the previous three years.

117. In the Courts of Magistrates, there were 241 appeals pending at the opening of the year. During the year, 4,945 appeals were preferred and 4,982 decided, leaving 204 pending at its close. The number preferred was 204 less than in 1902. Magistrates' Courts.

The number of persons whose appeals were decided by Courts of Magistrates was 8,457. Of these, the appeals of 1,868 were summarily dismissed, and the sentences on 3,820, whose appeals were admitted, were confirmed; making a total of 5,688 wholly unsuccessful appellants, or 67·2 per cent. Of the remainder 854 appellants, or 10 per cent., obtained a modification of the sentences passed on them, and 1,854, or 21·9 per cent., their total annulment. In the case of 57 appellants, a new trial or further inquiry was ordered and the cases of four appellants were referred to the High Court. The results are somewhat more favourable to appellants than those of the previous year.

SUPERINTENDENCE, REFERENCE AND REVISION

High Court.

118. Thirty-nine references under section 307 of the Code of Criminal Procedure from verdicts of Juries were decided during the year. The result of the 39 cases decided was that the verdict of the Jury was accepted in 16 cases, rejected in 19, and modified in three. One case was remanded for retrial. References under section 307, C. Cr. P.

119. Forty-three references under section 374 of the Code of Criminal Procedure for confirmation of death sentences were decided, and in the references decided, 50 persons were concerned. Of these, the death sentences on 29 were confirmed, and in the case of 12 their sentence was commuted to transportation for life. In the case of one person, a sentence of seven years' rigorous imprisonment was substituted, the accused having been convicted by the High Court of a minor offence, and in the case of one person a re-trial was ordered. One of the accused in one reference died before the case was disposed of. The remaining six persons were acquitted. References under section 374, C. Cr. P.

120. Sixteen cases under section 438 of the Code of Criminal Procedure were pending in the High Court at the opening of the year, and 258 such cases were reported for the orders of the High Court by Sessions Judges and District Magistrates during the year. Of these, 249 were decided. The number reported was three more than in 1902. In 150 cases, the orders sent up for revision were set aside, or the proceedings quashed, and in 38 a new trial was ordered. Sentences were reduced or altered in 11 cases and enhanced in Revision.

four. In one case the High Court ordered the transfer of the case to another district for trial, and in the remaining 44 cases, the High Court declined to interfere. In one of the cases reported, the accused absconded.

Under section 435 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, orders were passed on 1,023 cases, being 308 less than in 1902. Of the above 1,023 cases, 1,020 came before the High Court on applications made to it, and three were taken up on review of the periodical Sessions statements submitted by Sessions Judges.

Of the applications for the issue of rules, 653 were rejected. Of 367 rules issued, 100 were finally discharged, 140 were made absolute in their entirety; the orders complained of were modified in 76 cases; in 47 cases, a new trial was ordered and in four cases, orders for transfer to other Courts for trial were passed.

Applications for transfer.

121. Eighty-one applications under section 526 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, for the transfer of cases from one Court or district to another, were dealt with during the year. Of these, 26 were summarily rejected and in three cases transfers were granted without issue of a rule. In 52 cases rules were issued, with the result that transfers were granted in 44, and refused in 8, cases.

COURTS SUBORDINATE TO THE HIGH COURT.

Sessions Courts.

122. Including accused persons who themselves applied for revision of the orders passed on them in the Courts of Magistrates, and accused persons against whom such applications were made by complainants, the cases of 7,438 persons were decided on revision by Courts of Session during the year. The number was larger than in 1902 by 748. The applications of 3,106 persons were rejected, and as regards 1,436, the orders of the Lower Court were confirmed. Orders passed in the cases of 54 persons were reversed; in 77 instances proceedings were quashed; and the order of the Lower Court was modified in the case of 22 persons. In the cases of 2,275 persons, new trials or further inquiries were directed and the cases of 468 were referred to the High Court.

Magistrates' Courts.

123. The cases of 4,251 accused persons who applied for revision, or against whom applications were made by complainants, came before District Magistrates for revision. The total number was larger by 747 than in 1902. Of the total, the application of 1,706 persons were rejected and in the cases of 1,053, the original sentence or order was upheld. Sentences or orders affecting 22 persons were modified and those affecting 378 were reversed. In the case of 71 persons, proceedings were quashed, and in those of 953, new trials or further inquiries were directed. The cases of 68 persons were referred to the High Court.

MISCELLANEOUS.

Trials of European British Subjects.

124. Seventy-four cases were brought against European British subjects during the year. The number is three short of the number returned in 1902. Seven cases were pending at the opening of the year. Of the 81 cases before the Courts, 78 were disposed of and three remained pending at its close. Of those pending, two were cases in which the accused have, for long, been insane and incapable of making a defence. Of the cases disposed of, 72 were tried by Magistrates, one by a Sessions Judge, and the rest by the High Court.

The number of persons concerned in these cases was 86. Of these, three claimed a mixed Jury. Seven persons were either committed, transferred, or referred under section 307, Code of Criminal Procedure, to the High Court for trial; of these, five were acquitted and two convicted, one of an offence of hurt and the second of criminal intimidation, etc.

The cases of 78 persons were finally disposed of by Magistrates; and of these, 38 were convicted and 40 acquitted. The convictions were, in 16 cases for offences under special and local laws; in 7 cases for offences affecting public health; and in 3 cases for causing hurt. The largest number of European British subjects were tried in Darjeeling (42), Hooghly and the 24-Parganas (8 in each) and Howrah (7).

Receipts and Charges.

125. Debiting, as usual, to the administration of Criminal Justice, a proportion of the salaries of Judicial officers fixed by the time which their returns show them to have devoted to it, the total charges for the year amounted to Rs. 30,89,823. Of this amount, Rs. 19,47,807 were for the salaries of Judicial officers; Rs. 1,42,612 for fixed and temporary copying

establishments; Rs. 1,06,503 for process-servers; Rs. 4,82,143 for other establishments; and Rs. 4,10,758 for contingencies and refunds.

The receipts amounted to Rs. 15,70,739. Of this amount, Rs. 6,98,446 were under fines; Rs. 1,99,117 under process fees; Rs. 1,79,891 under copying and comparing fees; Rs. 3,94,104 under court-fee stamp receipts other than the above; and Rs. 99,181 were miscellaneous receipts.

Criminal Justice in the Sonthal Parganas, Angul and the Chittagong Hill Tracts.

126. The number of cases brought to trial in the scheduled districts of the Sonthal Parganas, Angul (including Khondmals) and the Chittagong Hill Tracts was 6,762; the total number of persons under trial, including those remaining from previous years, was 11,082. Of these, 3,859 were acquitted or discharged, and 6,731 convicted. Of the cases brought to trial, 947 were under "theft," 795 under "Criminal force and assault," 668 under "Criminal trespass" and 2,712 under "Offences under special and local laws." The total number of appellants and applicants for revision was 607. Of these, 155 were wholly or partly successful in their applications.

Jails.

[Administration Report on the Jails of Bengal for 1903; Judicial and Administrative Statistics of British India, Section V.]

Jail population.

127. The total population of the jails of Bengal, which amounted to 21,030 on the 1st of January 1903, was decreased by the release of 3,334 prisoners on the occasion of the Coronation of the King Emperor, but it rose steadily during the year, although admissions were fewer by over 2,000 than those of the preceding year, and stood at 19,907 at the end of the year. Of the 37,458 convicts admitted during the year, 55·29 per cent. were Hindus, 39·74 per cent. Muhammadans, ·90 per cent. Christians, ·27 per cent. Jains or Buddhists, and 3·80 per cent. belonged to other classes. 88·53 per cent. were illiterate. The number of females imprisoned was 1,292. The number of reconvicted prisoners was 5,027, and of prisoners confined under section 110, Criminal Procedure Code, 4,339. Thirty-seven thousand four hundred and sixty-four under-trial prisoners were admitted during the year. In spite of a decrease in the number of admissions, the average period of detention of under-trial prisoners shows an increase. Enquiries were ordered in the case of those jails and subsidiary jails which showed the most unsatisfactory results, and the attention of Commissioners and District Magistrates was drawn to the importance of seeing that these detentions are as short as possible. The number of civil prisoners admitted was 689. The daily average number of all classes of prisoners was 19,558.

Jail offences.

128. The total number of jail offences was 31,828: of these 40 were dealt with by Criminal Courts. Offences and punishments show a decrease, but the percentage of punishments to average number of convicts rose slightly, the result apparently of a number of releases of short-term prisoners in connection with the Coronation rejoicings. A scheme of remission of sentences by days to take the place of the record of marks was under consideration by Government at the close of the year.

Jail mortality.

129. The health of the prisoners during the year 1903 was in general good, and the death-rate, which stood for all the jails at 23·5 per mille against a death-rate of 33·33 per mille for the whole population of Bengal, was lower than any rate recorded during the last ten years, except those for the years 1898 and 1899. To the generally satisfactory statistics of health of the jail population the returns of the Barisal Jail furnish a marked exception. As noticed in last year's report, this jail has for some years had a very bad record of mortality, and for the year 1903 it shows a ratio of 90·6 deaths per mille, which is in excess even of previous records, and which, even after allowing for the bad health of many of the prisoners on admission, is an alarming rate. The Inspector-General who was required to submit a special report as to the steps which had been taken during the past year and which are proposed to improve the health of the prisoners in this jail, reported that the two main defects which have been factors in the excessive mortality have been, first, overcrowding and, secondly, bad water-supply. Not only has this jail been frequently overcrowded so far as regards accommodation in wards, but the jail is also "site crowded," *i.e.*, the area within the walls is insufficient.

The water-supply for the jail has been taken sometimes from a reserved tank and sometimes from the river. The river supply is considered the better, and should alone be used. Sanction has recently been given to enlarge the enclosed area of the jail; a new hospital has been built, and it is hoped that a municipal water-supply for the town and jail will be arranged. It is quite clear, however, that the state of this jail requires the very close attention of the Inspector-General and the local officers. As the jail authorities seemed in doubt whether all the causes of the present high mortality in this jail have been ascertained and whether they are removeable, a small Departmental Committee was appointed after the close of the year to conduct a careful inquiry into the causes of mortality in this jail.

Jail accommodation.

130. As frequently noticed in previous reports, the accommodation available in Bengal jails and subsidiary jails is insufficient, and specially in the case of under-trial prisoners. The expenditure incurred during the year on jail buildings amounted to Rs. 3,03,306, namely, Rs. 2,52,116 on original works and Rs. 51,190 on repairs, and it is hoped that a larger sum will be spent under this head during the current year. The want of accommodation has led to the mixing up of convicts and under-trial prisoners in some jails, to overcrowding, and to the absence of suitable quarantine arrangements where plague is prevalent. The importance of the question of improving accommodation is, however, fully recognized. Lists have been drawn up grouping the required works in order of urgency, and it is hoped that it may be possible to give effect to a programme of extension and improvement in the course of the next two or three years.

Employment of prisoners.

131. The total profits from the manufactures carried on in the several jails were Rs. 5,38,247. There was a satisfactory increase of average profit per head of those sentenced to labour from Rs. 30-12 to Rs. 31-9. The net earnings in Central jails per head of average strength of convicts ranged from Rs. 116-1 in the Presidency Jail to only Rs. 10-1 in Rampur Boalia. The profits at the Alipore jail fell to nearly half what they were in the previous year, owing to the transfer to Burma of all Burman prisoners, most of whom were skilled workmen whom it was impossible to replace; and to the release on the Coronation of the King Emperor of a number of other skilled prisoners.

Warder service.

132. The state of the jail warder force still remained unsatisfactory. It was suggested last year that the leave rules for these officers should be made more liberal with special reference to the fact that most of the warders come from up-country districts. It is understood, however, that the leave difficulties are principally due to the want of a reserve of warders, and the Inspector-General of Jails has been informed that Government will be prepared to consider proposals for the necessary increase of strength to enable leave to be more freely given.

Financial.

133. The total expenditure in guarding and maintaining prisoners during the year was Rs. 15,87,645, the average cost per prisoner being Rs. 81-2-9. There was a decrease of Rs. 2-11-4 per head in dietary charges.

Civil Justice.

[Report on the Administration of Civil Justice in the Lower Provinces of Bengal for 1903; Judicial and Administrative Statistics of British India, Section III.]

Judicial Staff.

134. The only change made during the year in the permanent judicial staff was the addition of three Munsifs. In addition to the permanent staff, a number of temporary officers were employed during the year.

In consequence of the continuous growth during recent years of arrears on the appellate side of the High Court, application was made to the Government of India for the addition of a Judge to the staff of the Court. This was sanctioned after the close of the year.

Another temporary addition to the staff was also applied for shortly before the close of the year, and subsequently sanctioned, in order to enable the courts in the mufassal to be inspected.

General.

135. The number of original suits pending in the High Court for over one year was 36 in excess of that of the previous year, though a slight reduction was effected in the total number of cases pending at the close of the year. The High Court made considerable progress during the year with civil

appellate work, the actual disposals during the year being 3,873 against 3,392 in 1902. As, however, there were still 7,340 appeals pending at the close of the year, nearly two years' work still remained undisposed of.

The most noticeable feature in the work of the subordinate Civil Courts was the large increase in institutions which rose from 642,807 in 1903 to 668,354. This figure is nearly 20,000 in excess of the previous record which was reached in the year 1900. As in the previous year the greater portion of the increase was in suits under the rent law. The number of rent suits instituted in the district of Midnapore was the largest in the province; and this large increase which, however, is not explained in the report, is probably due to the approaching settlement operations. An unsatisfactory feature of the year was that the average duration of cases before District Judges in contested cases has risen from 211 days in 1902 to 238 days in the year under report, and in uncontested suits from 183 to 204 days, while in the courts of Subordinate Judges it has risen from 321 to 382 days in contested cases, and from 166 to 187 in uncontested cases.

136. The receipts of the Civil Courts for the year under review amounted to Rs. 1,19,39,997, an increase of Rs. 59,717 on those of the previous year, and the charges to Rs. 56,90,188, an increase of Rs. 28,175 on those of 1902. Including the amount realised on account of duty on probates, etc., there was a surplus to Government from civil litigation of Rs. 62,49,809, and, exclusive of the item referred to, the surplus amounted to Rs. 56,36,566 or more by Rs. 86,198 than the surplus of 1902. **Financial.**

The receipts under court-fees other than process-fees show an increase on the previous year's figures of more than a lakh. Copying and comparing fees on the other hand have fallen by over half a lakh. Expenditure was practically the same as in 1902.

ORIGINAL JURISDICTION.

High Court.

137. The number of civil suits pending on the Original Side of the High Court at the end of 1902 was 1,718, including 67 pending suits received by transfer from other Courts; and the number instituted during 1903 was 927, including 19 suits received by transfer from other Courts during the year, making a total of 2,645 cases for disposal in 1903. Of the suits instituted during 1903, 496 were for money or moveable property, 127 were mortgage suits, and 96 for immoveable property. **Original suits.**

The value of suits for specific money claims was Rs. 48,87,657-11-1, as compared with Rs. 52,54,431-6-6 in the previous year.

The number of suits decided in 1903 was 971, and the number left undisposed of at the end of the year was 1,674. The number of suits under trial was fewer than that at the commencement of the year by 44. There were 965 suits pending over one year, showing an increase of 36 over the figures of the previous year.

Of the suits decided, 223 were dismissed for default or want of prosecution, 35 were withdrawn with leave, 32 were determined by compromise, 60 were decreed on confession, 251 were decreed *ex-parte*, 6 were dismissed *ex-parte*, 6 were disposed of by reference to arbitration, 261 were decreed after contest, and 97 were dismissed after contest.

138. At the commencement of the year one suit was pending in the High Court in its Extraordinary Original Civil Jurisdiction, and one suit was transferred to it during the year. Both of them remained pending at the close of the year. There were disposed of during the year 511 petitions for probate and Letters of Administration, 3,200 interlocutory applications (including applications for the appointment of guardians under the Guardians and Wards' Act, for the appointment of guardians *ad litem*, for the appointment of Receivers, for injunctions, for discovery of documents, for execution, etc.) and 750 applications for summonses to witnesses. **Extraordinary Jurisdiction, Probates, etc.**

139. The number of appeals from the Original to the Appellate Side of the Court pending at the commencement of 1903 was 30, and 65 new appeals were preferred during the year. Of these appeals, 8 were dismissed for default and 29 were decided, the decrees of the Court of First Instance being **Appeals from Original Jurisdiction.**

affirmed in 16, and reversed in 12, and in one case the appeal being remanded. Fifty-eight appeals remained undecided at the close of the year.

References from the Calcutta Court of Small Causes, etc.

140. At the commencement of the year 5 references were pending, and 2 were made during the year. Of these 5 were disposed of, the judgment of the Court below being affirmed in 2, and 3 cases being sent back.

Sixty-six cases transferred from the Calcutta Court of Small Causes under section 39 of the Presidency Small Cause Court Act were pending at the commencement of the year, and during the year 17 applications under that section and one under section 25 of the Code of Civil Procedure were made to the High Court for transfer to that Court All the applications were granted. Of the 84 cases for disposal, 6 were decreed after trial, 6 were dismissed after trial, 1 was withdrawn, 4 were decreed on confession, 1 was compromised, and 6 were dismissed for default. The remaining 60 cases were pending at the close of the year.

One application under section 622 of the Code of Civil Procedure to call for records from the Calcutta Court of Small Causes was pending at the commencement of the year, and seven such applications were made to the High Court during the year. Of these applications, 3 were refused and in 1 case the records were called for and the High Court directed a re-hearing by the Calcutta Small Cause Court. Four cases were pending at the close of the year.

The number of cases pending in the Insolvency Court at the commencement of the year was 211, and the number instituted during the year was 201. Of the 412 cases for disposal, 222 were disposed of, in 49 cases the adjudication being set aside or superseded, and the insolvents obtaining relief in 173 cases. Of the persons who sought relief in the cases disposed of, 109 were traders within the meaning of the Insolvency Act, 63 were private persons, and 50 were persons employed in public and other offices.

There were also disposed of during the year 51 applications for *ad interim* protection and 1,036 applications of a miscellaneous character.

Appeals to the Privy Council.

141. One appeal from the Original Side was pending at the commencement of the year, and one fresh appeal was admitted during the year under review. Both remained pending at the close of the year. The delay in the former case was due to the fact that the record was a voluminous one, and that a long time was required for the preparation of the paper book for transmission to England.

Financial.

142. The receipts and expenditure of the High Court on the Original Side during 1903 were respectively Rs. 7,21,537 and Rs. 4,13,201.

Civil Courts in the Mufassal subordinate to the High Court.

143. Towards the end of the year, the civil powers exercised by the Deputy Commissioner of Ranchi in his capacity of Subordinate Judge were withdrawn from him and vested in the Subordinate Judge attached to the districts of Hazaribagh, Ranchi, and Palamau.

Original suits.

144. During the year 668,354 suits were instituted. This number is considerably the largest on record; being not only 25,547 in excess of the figures of 1902, but nearly 20,000 above those of 1900, which were the largest up to that year. The increase is mainly attributable to the natural development of population and prosperity. In certain districts, settlement operations appear to have contributed to it to a considerable extent.

The greater portion of the increase was in suits under the Rent Law, which rose from 297,399 in 1902 to 316,900, or by 7·1 per cent. The number of suits for money and moveables increased by 2·4 per cent. Title suits on the other hand show a trifling decrease.

The value of suits instituted in 1903 was Rs. 10,57,11,164, above two and-a-half crores more than in 1902. The increase is due to the institution of two suits, valued at about one crore each, in the districts of Gaya and Patna.

In all the districts, with the exception of Chittagong, Cuttack, Dinajpur, Gaya, Mymensingh, Patna and 24-Parganas, there was an increase in the number of suits instituted in 1903. In Cuttack and Mymensingh the decrease was considerable. In the former district it is stated to have been due to the fact that the year was not a prosperous one; in the latter it is unexplained. In the remaining districts the decrease was trifling.

There is little variation in the relative number of institutions in the various districts, and they stand nearly in the same order as in previous years. Tippera, with 44,940, now heads the list for the first time, owing to an increase in money and rent-suits of 5,534 (the largest in the Province). Jessore, where the number of suits was less by 648 than in Tippera, stands second. Midnapore, where the institutions for the first time exceeded 40,000 suits, is the third; the number of rent-suits instituted (26,844) being the largest in the Province. It is stated that certain important zamindars in the district filed a particularly large number of such suits during the year under report.

The majority of the institutions were for trifling sums. In suits for money or moveables, 61·4 per cent., and in rent-suits, 77·4 per cent. were for sums less than Rs. 50, their proportion to the number of suits instituted being in the case of the former slightly larger than, and of the latter the same as in the previous year.

In suits under the Rent Law, 99 per cent. were for realisation of arrears of rent. Of the suits classified as title-suits, 44·8 per cent. were mortgage-suits, 39· for immoveable property, and 9·8 for specific relief. Of the 45 suits instituted during the year, which were valued at over a lakh, 43 were title-suits.

145. In addition to the 668,354 suits instituted during the year, and 105,004 pending trial from the previous year, there were 19,672 suits revived, or received on remand or review during the year, making a total for disposal of 793,030.

The number of suits disposed of was 684,209. This exceeds the figures of the previous year by 19,610 and is the largest on record.

Of the total disposed of, 650,918 were disposed of by Munsifs, 14,226 by Subordinate Judges, 18,231 by Small Cause Court Judges, and 834 by District and Additional Judges.

In the suits disposed of during the year, plaintiffs were unsuccessful in 135,458 cases, or 19·8 per cent., of which 94,699 were dismissed for default; in 96,936 cases, or 14·2 per cent., a compromise was effected, and plaintiffs were successful in 451,815 cases, or 66 per cent. Plaintiffs were more successful than in the three preceding years.

Of the 124,002 suits decided on contest, 101,886, or 82·2 per cent., resulted in favour of plaintiffs, and 22,116, or 17·8 per cent., in favour of defendants.

The proportion of applications for retrial to the number of cases dismissed in default or decreed *ex-parte* was fractionally less than in the previous year, the numbers being 31,690 and 429,257, respectively. The applications were successful in 18,903 cases, or 59·6 per cent., the proportion being slightly larger than in the previous year.

Suits decided by Munsifs.

146. There was an increase of 18,146 in the number of suits disposed of by Munsifs. This increase was due to the average number of suits disposed of by Munsifs having risen to 2,107 from 2,048 in the previous year; the staff employed, including temporary Munsifs, having been numerically almost identical in the two years. The rise is in uncontested suits; the average number of contested suits disposed of having been 376 as against 383 in 1902.

The number of contested suits disposed of by Munsifs in 1903 was 116,372, or 17·8 per cent. of the total. In the three previous years the proportion was 18·6 per cent., 18·3 per cent., and 17·3 per cent., respectively. In suits under the ordinary procedure disposed of by Munsifs, the percentage of those contested was 19·5 per cent., and in suits under the Small Cause Court procedure 13·7.

Of the total number of suits disposed of by Munsifs, 29·5 per cent. were under the Small Cause Court procedure. The number of cases decided by Munsifs under the ordinary procedure shows an increase of 12,703, as compared with 1902.

Suits disposed of by Subordinate Judges.

147. The number of original suits disposed of by Subordinate Judges in 1903 was 14,226, a decrease of 185 on the figures of the previous year. The number of suits decided under ordinary procedure fell from 5,466 to 5,271. The fall is compensated by the rise in the number of appeals disposed of, noted towards the end of the chapter. It is, moreover, to be observed that fewer temporary appointments having been made during the year under review, the staff was appreciably weaker than in the preceding year. The number of

contested suits decided under ordinary procedure was 2,357, and that under powers of a Small Cause Court 1,800; the percentages to the totals decided being 44·7 and 20·1, respectively. The percentages are normal.

Disposals by Small Cause Courts.

148. The Provincial Small Cause Courts disposed of 18,231 original suits, of which 3,122 were contested. Work in the Court at Munshiganj has increased appreciably during the last three years. Elsewhere it is stationary.

Average duration of cases.

149. There was a marked increase in the duration of cases before District and Subordinate Judges. This is unsatisfactory; but the Courts are not altogether responsible, having been in several cases undermanned during the year.

Pending suits.

150. The number of suits pending at the close of the year rose from 105,004 to 108,820. The increase is due to the large rise in the number of suits instituted, which prevented work from being brought up to date before the close of the year.

Of the pending cases, 1,520 had been pending for more than a year, 5,891 for more than six months, and 37,113 for more than three months. Of the suits pending over one year, 604 were in the Courts of Munsifs, and 916 in the Courts of the District and Subordinate Judges. The former figure represents a considerable, and the latter a slight, reduction on the figures of the previous year.

Execution Proceedings.

151. There were 103,672 applications for execution of decrees pending from the previous year, and 471,152 such applications were made during the year. Realisation was complete in 136,326 cases and partial in 111,949. In 212,695 cases proceedings were returned as infructuous, and 106,328 remained pending at the close of the year. The total amount realised in Courts other than Small Cause Courts was Rs. 2,22,28,263. Debtors were imprisoned in 358 cases, moveable property was sold in 14,403, and immoveable in 72,833.

Miscellaneous cases.

152. The number of miscellaneous cases of a judicial nature instituted rose from 75,573 to 78,278; the number disposed of from 75,227 to 78,947, and the number pending from 16,086 to 16,312. Of the cases disposed of 30,520 were withdrawn, compromised or confessed; 23,977 were decided *ex-parte;* and 24,450 were contested. Of the total number of applications disposed of after contest, 55·3 per cent. were granted. Of the pending cases, 201 had been pending for more than a year. The relative proportions of the figures show little fluctuation.

The miscellaneous cases of a non-judicial nature instituted during the year were 18,390 in number. Of these, as usual, two-thirds were applications for the deposit of rent. Disposals numbered 19,408, and the pending file decreased to 2,306.

Calcutta Small Cause Court.

153. The number of suits instituted and decided in the Presidency Court of Small Causes during 1903 was 22,674 and 23,169, respectively. Institutions were more numerous than in 1902 by 709, and disposals by 796. There were 601 suits restored to the file during the year; and the number pending at its close was 2,516, or 89 more than at the close of the previous year.

The increase in institutions was most noticeable in respect of suits of values between Rs. 100 and Rs. 500. Suits above Rs. 1,000 in value increased from 424 to 445.

The total value of the litigation in the Presidency Small Cause Court was Rs. 30,92,534 in the year under review, as compared with Rs. 29,84,781 in the preceding year.

The average duration of contested and uncontested cases during 1903 was 46·6 and 38·9 days, respectively; the former being 4 days and the latter 3 days longer than in 1902. It is explained that parties avail themselves more freely than formerly of a rule of practice permitting cases to be postponed on a requisition signed by all the parties. For such postponements, and for the consequent nominally longer duration of cases, the Court is not responsible. The rules, which came into force in 1900, have been found to work well in effecting the object with which they were framed, that of relieving the Judge of routine work, and enabling them to devote their time to the hearing of cases.

Cases, when brought to a hearing, are promptly disposed of, as the slight difference between the average duration of uncontested and contested cases indicates.

Of the 23,169 suits disposed of during 1903, 1,357 were dismissed for default or want of prosecution, or were withdrawn with leave; 18,662 were decided without contest, and 3,149 were decided after contest or upon reference to arbitration.

Of the 2,516 suits remaining under trial at the close of 1903, only 35 had been pending for more than three months. The number so pending at the end of the previous year was 43.

154. Out of 33,429 applications for the execution of decrees dealt with in the Presidency Small Cause Court, of which 876 were pending from the previous year, 32,611 were determined and 818 remained pending at the close of the year. Of the latter, 198 were more than three months old. Of the applications disposed of, 26,152 resulted in whole or partial satisfaction of the decrees granted, 4,472 were returned as wholly infructuous, and 1,987 were transferred to other Courts. Execution of Decrees.

The total amount realised was Rs. 7,86,063, as compared with Rs. 7,85,842 in the previous year.

In order to enforce the execution of decrees, imprisonment was resorted to in 92 cases and sale of moveables in 675. The number is less in the former case and greater in the latter than in 1902.

APPELLATE JURISDICTION.

High Court.

155. Under section 15 of the Letters Patent 65 First Appeals were filed during the year, and 37 were decided. The number pending at the close of the year was 58. Fifty-two third appeals were filed during the year, none of which were decided before its close. Appeals under the Letters Patent.

Appeals from the Subordinate Civil Courts.

156. The number of first and second appeals from the decrees and orders of the Provincial Courts as Courts of Original and Appellate Jurisdiction, respectively, which came before the High Court and were decided during the past year, is shown in the margin. The figures include appeals from the Courts of Assam. The institutions of first appeals from decrees and from orders, and of second appeals from decrees were, respectively, 29, 26, and 103 less than in 1902. Second appeals from orders were 33 more than in 1902. Appeals to the High Court from Subordinate Courts.

	Pending at the end of 1902.	Preferred.	Decided.	Pending at the end of 1903.
First Appeals.				
From Decrees	1,196	447	437	1,206
,, Orders	362	250	271	341
Second Appeals.				
From Decrees	5,770	2,801	2,936	5,635
,, Orders	134	253	229	158
Total	7,462	3,751	3,873	7,340

The number of first appeals and of second appeals from decrees decided exceed that of 1902 by 152 and 407, respectively. This large increase is mainly to be attributed to the fact that a single Bench was able to deal with the Criminal Appellate work of the year. In the preceding year a second Criminal Bench was required for 85 days. Also, 236 second appeals were disposed of during the year by a single Judge. No appeals were so disposed of in the previous year.

At the close of the year there were pending 1,547 first appeals, of which 1,206 were from decrees and 341 from orders; and 5,793 second appeals, of which 5,635 were from decrees. The result of the year's work was that the number of first appeals from decrees pending at the close of the year remained practically stationary, and that of second appeals was slightly reduced.

Details of value of Appeals.

157. The following table shows the values of appeals brought before the Court during the year from the Original and Appellate decrees of the subordinate Civil Courts:—

		Appeals from Original decrees of subordinate Civil Courts.	Appeals from Appellate decrees of subordinate Civil Courts.	Second and third appeals under the Letters Patent.
	Rs.			
Not exceeding	10	...	237	10
	50	...	933	40
	100	...	466	...
	500	43	740	1
	1,000	20	163	1
	5,000	80	198	...
	10,000	99	...	...
	1,00,000	104	...	...
Exceeding ...	1,00,000	13	...	...
Value not denotable in money		88	94	...
	Total ...	447	2,801	52

Results of Appeals.

158. Of the 437 appeals from Original decrees decided during the year, 61 were uncontested, being dismissed on default, withdrawn or compromised. Of those decided after contest, 264 decrees of the Lower Courts were confirmed, 41 reversed, 45 varied, and 26 remanded.

Of the 2,936 appeals from Appellate decrees, 817 were uncontested. Two thousand one hundred and nineteen were heard and determined, with the result that 1,681 decrees of the lower Courts were affirmed, 96 reversed, 70 varied, and 272 remanded.

Of the 500 appeals from orders decided during the last year, 142 were uncontested and 358 were decided after trial. Of the latter, 245 orders of the lower Courts were affirmed, 32 reversed, 22 varied, and 59 remanded.

The following table shows the result of the appeals decided by the High Court as affecting District Judges and Subordinate Judges.

	Affirmed.			Modified or Reversed.		
	District Judges.	Subordinate Judges.	Munsifs.	District Judges.	Subordinate Judges.	Munsifs.
Appeals from Original decrees	47	217		25	59	
Appeals from Appellate decrees	586	1,095		44	122	
Miscellaneous appeals ...	90	154		18	36	

Appeals to the Privy Council.

159. At the opening of the year, 9 appeals to the Privy Council were under preparation for despatch to England, and 8 were pending orders. Thirty-two new appeals were filed during the year. Of the total for disposal, 13 were struck off or compromised, 10 were despatched to England, and 26 appeals—5 of 1902 and 21 of 1903—were pending at the close of the year. Of the pending appeals, 5 were under preparation for despatch to England at the close of the year.

The results of 11 appeals to the Privy Council were received during the year. The decisions of the High Court were affirmed in 6 instances, reversed in 3, and varied in 2.

Appellate Courts subordinate to the High Court.

Appeals Instituted.

160. There were 19,853 appeals instituted in 1903; a decrease, as compared with previous year, of 734.

Of the number instituted in 1903, 8,519 were in title-suits, 8,784 in rent-suits, and 2,550 in suits for money or moveables. The number shows a decrease in the two first-named classes, and an increase in the last named.

The number of appeals valued at sums below Rs. 10 and between Rs. 10 and Rs. 50 was 2,401 and 6,770 respectively. The total value of appeals

instituted in the subordinate Courts in 1903 was Rs. 32,46,252, showing a decrease of over one lakh, as compared with 1902.

The number of cases decided by the subordinate Civil Courts, in which an appeal lay to the District Court, was 84,945; and the proportion of appeals instituted to appealable decisions, excluding appeals from decisions of Revenue Officers, was 22·5 per cent. as against 23·5 of the previous year. The highest percentages were 38·4 in Gaya, 36·7 in Patna, 36·1 in Dacca, 35·5 in Chota Nagpur, and 30·7 in Cuttack; and the lowest were 10·1 in Dinajpur, 12·5 in Murshidabad, and 13·7 in Purnea and Rangpur.

Appeals disposed of.

161. The number of appeals decided was 20,426. The figure is the highest since 1898. In the Courts of District and Additional Judges disposals increased by 329, and in those of Subordinate Judges by 576, as compared with the previous year.

Variations from the results of previous years in the outturn in particular districts call for no special comment. They correspond in the main with variations in the nature of the appellate work itself or in other classes of work to which more or less time had to be devoted.

Appeals pending.

162. There were 13,085 appeals pending at the close of the year, the number being almost the same as at its opening.

The number of appeals pending for more than one year rose considerably during the year, there being at its close 1,052, as compared with 624 in 1902. The largest number of appeals pending over one year was in Noakhali (238), 24-Parganas (223), and Chittagong (205). In each of these districts the files had for various reasons become congested, and temporary assistance to each of them has been necessitated.

Result of Appeals.

163. The result on the decisions of the lower courts of the appeals decided during the year was as follows:—In 11,304 cases, or 55·3 per cent., of the whole, the judgment of the lower Court was affirmed; in 2,430 cases, or 11·8 per cent., it was modified; and in 3,508, or 17·1 per cent., it was reversed. The relative proportions of the above figures call for no explanation. The results are less favourable to the lower Courts than those of the preceding year. Eight hundred and thirty-three appeals were remanded, and 2,351 were either not prosecuted, or dismissed for default.

Miscellaneous Appeals.

164. There were 3,161 miscellaneous appeals instituted during the year, and 3,197 were disposed of; 680 remaining pending at the close of the year.

Administration of Civil Justice in the scheduled districts of Angul, the Sonthal Parganas and the Chittagong Hill Tracts.

165. The total number of suits instituted during the year in the Civil Courts in the scheduled districts of Angul (including Khondmals), the Sonthal Parganas and the Chittagong Hill Tracts was 12,948; the number of money suits was 7,904, of rent-suits 3,970 and of title and other suits 1,074. The total number of civil suits for disposal was 14,617. The number disposed of (excluding the number of suits transferred to Courts in other provinces) was 12,787. Of this number 3,487 suits were contested and 281 were disposed of by arbitration. The total number of appeals from decrees presented to the Civil Appellate Courts of the districts was 756, and the number disposed of was 674. Out of 127 miscellaneous civil appeals, 119 were disposed of. Eleven thousand nine hundred and twenty-two applications for the execution of decrees were made, and the number disposed of was 10,137.

Registration.

[Statistical Returns with a brief note of the Registration Department in Bengal, 1903; Judicial and Administrative Statistics of British India, Section IX.]

General.

166. Six new offices were opened during the year, and at the close of the year there were 454 offices in existence. The total number of registrations decreased from 1,468,095 in 1902 to 1,448,010 in 1903, *i.e.*, by 1·4 per cent. The total receipts of the department decreased from Rs. 16,80,111 in 1902 to Rs. 16,41,989 in 1903, *i.e.*, by 2·3 per cent. The total expenditure decreased from Rs. 8,98,102 in 1902 to Rs. 8,90,418 in the year under review, *i.e.*, by ·8 per cent. Proposals for the reorganisation of the Registration Department were submitted for the favourable consideration of the Government of India at the end of October 1903.

In the districts of the Burdwan Division there was not much variation in the total number of documents registered in 1903 as compared with

the preceding year, except in Midnapore, where there was an increase (chiefly due to an increase in optional mortgages) of 5·7 per cent. over the previous year's figure, which is attributed to the stress of high prices of rice which prevailed in the district.

The fall in the number of perpetual leases in all the districts of the Division except Midnapore, Hooghly and Howrah, was remarkable. The resumption and settlement of *chaukidari chakran* and *ghatwali* lands which were in progress in previous years, have nearly been completed, leading to a large decrease in the number of perpetual leases of such lands granted by the zamindars.

The only noticeable features in the district of the Presidency Division are:—(1) a large increase of 24·2 per cent. in optional mortgages in 24-Parganas, and (2) a decrease of 12 per cent. in the number of leases for terms of years in Jessore. The Registrar of the 24-Parganas has reported that the year under review was one of anxiety to the agricultural class owing to the late rains. The Registrar of Jessore attributes the decrease partly to low lands having been submerged during the ploughing season and the consequent inability of the raiyats to take settlements of them for cultivation.

In the Dacca Division an increase (5·3 per cent.) in the total number of documents registered in the district of Faridpur and a large decrease (7·7 per cent.) in the district of Backergunge are noticeable. The increase in Faridpur took place under the heads optional mortgages, sales, perpetual and term leases. It is ascribed to the dulness of the trade in jute and sugarcane, and to the new settlements of *char* lands. The Registrar of Backergunge has pointed out that the total number of registrations in 1902 was unusually large owing to the commencement of the general survey and settlement of the district and the partial failure of the *aus* and *rabi* crops. The falling off in the year 1903 probably indicates a return to normal conditions.

In the districts of the Rajshahi Division a general increase is noticeable. The largest percentage of increase (17) was in Dinajpur, where all classes of documents, sales, mortgage bonds, &c., shewed an increase, which is remarkable, as it is reported that there were bumper crops in the year under report and the condition of the cultivators was good. Much of the increase in Dinajpur is no doubt due to the fact that the Joint Sub-Registry Office of Thakurgaon at Lahiri Hát, which was started for the first time on the 1st May 1902, was open throughout the year 1903 for registering documents.

In the Chittagong Division registrations fell off largely (by 8·3 per cent.) in the district of Tippera, owing to good crops. In the other two districts there was not much variation.

Registrations fell off largely in all the districts of the Patna Division. The decrease in Patna (12·2 per cent.) is ascribed to the prevalence of plague, that in Muzaffarpur (14·4 per cent.) to good crops and plague in the Sadar subdivision, and in Gaya and Champaran the number of registrations decreased by 15·2 per cent. and 18·5 per cent. respectively, owing to the better outturn of crops.

In the Bhagalpur Division also, the number of registrations decreased appreciably, except in Malda and the Sonthal Parganas. The largest decrease, (35·6 per cent.) was that of Bhagalpur, where the total number of registrations fell from 28,327 in 1902 to 18,227 in 1903. Out of the total decrease of 10,100 deeds, a decrease of 7,276 deeds (62·9 per cent. of the figure for 1902) falls under the head "Instruments of lease (other than perpetual) which have been compulsorily registered." This large falling off was due to the abnormal registration in 1902 of raiyati *kabuliyats* in the north of the district before the cadastral survey and settlement commenced. As stated in last year's Report there was a large increase (50·4 per cent.) in the number of such leases in 1902 as compared with 1901.

The good outturn of *bhadoi* and winter crops in the north of the district and the plague scare in the latter part of the year under review also contributed to the decrease under other heads, such as sale, mortgage, &c.

The increase (9·1 per cent.) in Malda was due partly to the increased number of registrations in the newly opened office at Chanchal, and partly to other causes, such as the unsatisfactory condition of the silk trade, &c.

The increase in the Sonthal Parganas was small.

In the Chota Nagpur Division all the districts shewed a decrease in registrations, except Manbhum and Singhbhum. The Registrar of Hazaribagh has reported that the passing of the Chota Nagpur Tenancy (Amendment) Act V of 1903 and the stoppage of land settlements by the zamindar of Ramgarh, have led to the fall (12·6 per cent.) in registrations. As the amending Act V of 1903 came into force on the 4th November 1903, it is still too early to judge fully of its effects on the registration of deeds. In Palamau, the large decrease (14·5 per cent.) is ascribed by the Registrar to the extension of the encumbered estates management to many new estates and to the advance of Rs. 10,000 in agricultural loans.

Manbhum has been exempted from the operation of the amending Act V of 1903 and the increase in registrations (7·3 per cent.) is attributed partly to the dulness of the coal market.

In the Orissa Division there was an increase of 5·4 per cent. in Balasore, due to the opening of a new office at Dhamnagar.

Working of the Indian Companies Act.

167. The number of Companies existing at the close of the year was 416 with a nominal capital of Rs. 22,27,68,034 and a paid-up capital of Rs. 17,23,02,062, against 407 Companies with a nominal capital of Rs. 21,76,15,034 and a paid-up capital of Rs. 17,01,69,458 existing at the end of the preceding year. There was thus an increase of 9 in the number of Companies of Rs 51,53,000 in the nominal capital, and of Rs. 21,32,604 in the paid-up capital, during the year. Fifty-seven Companies increased their capital during the year; the total nominal capital was increased by Rs. 41,05,000, and the total paid-up capital by Rs. 60,82,833. Nine Companies having an aggregate nominal capital of Rs. 37,75,000 and a paid-up capital of Rs. 24,80,590 ceased to work during the year. Two Companies limited by guarantee were registered during the year. One of these, "The Cremation Society of Bengal" deserves special notice as indicating a departure from the established social customs of Europeans in this country. The fees realised during the year were Rs. 8,349 and the expenditure amounted to Rs. 994-15-6.

Working of the Muhammadan Marriage Registration Act.

168. Act I (B.C.) of 1876 for the voluntary registration of Muhammadan marriages and divorces was in force in 32 districts, against 31 in the previous year. The number of offices open and ceremonies registered rose from 267 and 29,229 to 270 and 29,620 respectively. The total receipts on account of fees and gratuities of the Kazis amounted to Rs. 51,310, against Rs. 48,881 in 1902-1903.

Working of the Brahmo Marriage Act.

169. There were 33 marriages registered under the Act during the year under review, as against 41 in the previous year; 22 marriages were registered in Calcutta, two each in Patna and Faridpur, and one each in Cuttack, Barisal, Dacca, Mymensingh, Birbhum, Tippera and Bhagalpur.

There were 22 Marriage Registrars under the Act, besides 30 *ex-officio* Marriage Registrars. Of these, only 11 Marriage Registrars and two *ex-officio* Marriage Registrars registered marriages during the year. The ages of the bridegrooms ranged from 19 to 45 years, and those of the brides from 14 to 33 years.

Municipal Administration and Local Self-Government.

MUNICIPALITIES OUTSIDE CALCUTTA.

[The Divisional Commissioners' Reports on the working of Municipalities in Bengal (except Calcutta) during the year 1903-1904; Judicial and Administrative Statistics of British India, Section XVII.]

General.

170. There were 161 Municipalities in existence in the Province during the year under review. During the year, the marked improvement effected in the course of the preceding five years in the financial administration of the Municipalities of the Province continued at a rate of progress considerably in advance of that hitherto attained, and the fruits of good administration are more apparent. There has been an improvement in the sanitation of many of the towns in the Province, improved resources having permitted of a considerable increase in the expenditure incurred on conservancy. The problem of water-supply has received particular attention; and the successful results attained in Howrah and Burdwan deserve special commendation, the case of the latter town being the more worthy of notice by reason of its previous

failure to attain even a moderate standard of success. There is moreover a list of unprecedented length of towns which have either inaugurated or are engaged in preparing schemes for a complete system of drainage, which they are now in a position to undertake by reason of the recent expansion of their revenues. The registered death-rate in the towns of each division as a whole, save that of Patna where it has unfortunately been swelled by plague, shows a steady decline in recent years, particularly in the last four in which the death-rate of all the municipal towns in Bengal fell from 43·4 to 36·3 per mille. The fall in the death-rate from fever in the same period is no less remarkable, being 14·2 per mille in the year 1903 against 19·9 in 1900. The ratio of deaths from dysentery and cholera is also instructive as indicating the quality of the water-supply, the death-rate per mille under these heads having similarly declined from 4 and 5 to 2·9 and 3 respectively. In the individual towns where water-works have been instituted the decline in the death-rate from these water-borne diseases is particularly marked, especially in Dacca, Nasirabad, Burdwan and Darjeeling. These figures point to an improvement of the sanitary conditions; and no less significant, in another direction, of the general advance of municipal government is the large increase of the number of meetings held and of the attendance at each, and the simultaneous decline of the meetings adjourned for want of a quorum.

There was a marked improvement in collections, which averaged 98·6 of the current demand—a ratio that has only once been equalled, accompanied as it is by an unprecedented reduction of outstanding demands, which are now only 7·5 per cent. of the current demand—a result that has hitherto never been even approximately attained. This improvement is shared by every Division, and is especially marked in Orissa, Chota Nagpur, and Burdwan, where the ratio of collections to current demand rose from 84·3, 95·4, and 95·2 in 1902-1903 to 103·4 101·0 and 99·4 in the year under review; while the percentage of remissions declined in each case respectively from 12·3, 6·9 and 8·6 to 3·8, 3·7 and 5·3.

Number of rate-payers

171. The total number of rate-payers was 492,843, or 7,226 more than in 1902-1903, and the percentage they bore to municipal population was 17·17 against 17·08 in the preceding year. The percentage varies from 31·34 at Katwa in the Burdwan Division to 6·4 at Titaghar in the Presidency Division; while the divisional percentage is highest, as usual, in the Presidency (19·01) and lowest in Dacca (14·5). The increase in the number of rate-payers is shared between all the Divisions except Patna, in which Division no less than 13 Municipalities show a decline which is attributable almost entirely to the emigration of residents during the outbreak of plague.

Results of elections held during the year.

172. General elections of Commissioners were held in 75 Municipalities, which were successful in practically all cases. The majority of the elections were contested; and the percentage of attendance of persons qualified to vote varied between 3·2 in Ward No. I of the Deoghur Municipality and 98·1 in Ward No. IV of the Chapra Municipality. There is no indication of any decline of public interest in municipal affairs.

Constitution of Committees and attendance at meetings.

173. The total number of Commissioners increased from 2,196 to 2,236, and the number of meetings held by them from 2,620 to 2,846. Of these only 201 had to be adjourned against 227 in 1902-1903. The number of Municipalities which held more than 20 meetings was larger than in the previous year, whilst only 8 against 15 failed to hold at least one meeting every month. Throughout the Province the average percentage of attendance of Commissioners was 59·9 against 51·62 in the year 1902-1903; while in 118 Municipalities, as against 80 in the previous year, an average of more than one-half of the total number of Commissioners attended at each meeting.

Assessment and Taxation.

174. Of the alternative systems under which the main forms of municipal taxes are levied, the rate on holdings is in force in 47 Municipalities and the tax on persons in the rest; while in the Municipalities of Bhadreswar, Baidyabati, South Dum-Dum and Deoghur both forms are in force in different wards. The rate on holdings was levied at less than the maximum rate allowed by the law in 14 towns, among which the Municipalities of Howrah, Hooghly-Chinsura, Darjeeling and Patna again find place, and the lowest rate, viz., 3 per cent. on the annual value of holdings, was levied in Ward No. III of South Dum-Dum. The tax on persons is levied in different towns at widely

varying rates. The system is only adapted to the less advanced Municipalities, and it is a matter for comment that in many large and important Municipalities this primitive form of taxation is in force. The influence of controlling officers might profitably be exercised in inducing Municipal Commissioners to adopt (to which a tendency already exists) the alternative system, which, given an adequate means of assessment, would inevitably produce better financial results. Of the special rates, the latrine rate was levied in 108 towns, the water-rate in 12 towns which are provided with a supply of filtered water (in Dacca no water-rate is levied, although a filtered water-supply exists there) and the lighting rate only in the towns of Howrah and Darjeeling, no rate being levied for the purpose in the other Municipalities adjoining Calcutta, which are lighted with gas, or at Dacca which is lighted with electricity. The Kurseong Municipality have recently obtained the sanction of Government to the levy of a water-rate which takes effect from 1st April 1904.

The incidence of Municipal taxation (excluding Calcutta) varied between Rs. 7-2-10 per head at Darjeeling and Re. 0-3-4 at the new Municipality of Nawabganj in the District of Malda. The average for the whole Province was Rs. 1-3-11, showing an increase of one anna per head since the previous year. In 31 towns against 32 in 1902-1903 the incidence of taxation is below 8 annas per head.

Revision of assessment.

175. Assessments were revised during the year generally or partially in 51 Municipalities.

A large increase of Rs. 11,129 was effected in the Garden Reach Municipality, which was due to the imposition of a water-rate within the Municipality from 1st April 1903, while in Arrah an increase of Rs. 8,444 resulted from a revision of the assessments of water and latrine rates. A general revision of assessment was made in the North Barrackpore Municipality by an Assessor appointed by Government, which resulted in an increase of 20 per cent. on the previous demand. The revised assessment takes effect from the beginning of the current year. In the Cuttack Municipality the funds for the clearing of private privies and cess-pools having been found inadequate, the Municipal Commissioners raised the scale of latrine fees; this resulted in an increase of Rs. 7,269 and is to come into force with effect from 1st April 1904. The Magistrate and Commissioner have, however, questioned the equity of the assessment, and the matter will be separately considered when their reports are received. The whole system of assessment in this town has already attracted the unfavourable notice of Government.

In last year's Report the outlines were given of a scheme for improving the procedure under which assessments are conducted. Local officers were consulted, and their opinions have since been received. There was a large consensus in favour of the proposal to restrict the membership of Appellate Committees to 5, inclusive of the *ex-officio* members, the Chairman and Vice-Chairman. The further proposal to exclude any member, except the *ex-officio* members, from the hearing of appeals from the ward which he represents similarly met with general acceptance; and many municipalities have already spontaneously adopted these principles as the basis of the formation of their Appellate Committees. The second proposal, that of the establishment of a staff of peripatetic Assessors, has given rise to a certain amount of opposition, which seems to be due in no small degree to a misunderstanding of the effect of the proposals put forward. A definite scheme has been formulated, of which the essential feature is that the employment of the trained assessing staff is to be optional. Its adoption will ensure both regular and equal assessments at a small cost; and it is probable that most municipalities of any size or importance will readily adopt it.

Income and expenditure.

176. The total funds available for expenditure by the several Municipalities were Rs. 63,30,239, against Rs. 55,83,623 in the previous year. The total expenditure incurred by them was Rs. 53,85,903, against Rs. 47,53,072 in 1902-1903.

Closing balances of Municipalities.

177. The aggregate closing balances of all the Municipalities amounted to Rs. 9,44,336 at the close of the year, against Rs. 8,30,551 in the preceding year. In some cases funds were accumulated for the purpose of introducing a complete system of surface drainage and other sanitary improvements; in

others savings effected in estimated expenditure and the inability fully to utilise loan funds contributed to this result; while in some cases there was an unexpected improvement in collections. In the Howrah Municipality the heavy balance of Rs. 2,16,515 includes the amount of loans received from Government for the reconstruction of the Buckland Bridge, and for the completion of a drainage scheme, the construction of a conservancy tramway and the extension of the market. The closing balances were also large at Darjeeling, Dacca, Chapra, Bhatpara and Gaya.

INCOME.

Income.

178. The total receipts of the 161 Municipalities during the year, excluding their opening balances, were Rs. 54,98,182 against Rs. 49,50,383. More than half of this increase of Rs. 5,47,799 occurred under "debt and suspense" heads, and it does not therefore represent the real increase in the ordinary revenues of the Municipalities. Excluding the receipts under "Extraordinary and Debt" the total revenue receipts amounted to Rs. 44,94,916 against Rs. 42,44,878 in the previous year, showing an increase of Rs. 2,50,038, or 5·8 per cent., of which two lakhs against less than half a lakh last year were derived from taxation proper. This increase, which is nearly a lakh in excess of the progressive rate of increase maintained during the last five years, was shared by all the Divisions, and was largest in Burdwan, where it amounted to Rs. 57,333.

Tax on houses and lands.

179. The total revenue under this head amounted to Rs. 12,62,624, which was Rs. 62,726 in excess of the revenue of the previous year. The increase was shared to a greater or lesser extent by all the Divisions, and the largest increases of Rs. 21,063 and Rs. 14,613 occurred respectively in Burdwan and the Presidency.

Tax on animals and vehicles.

180. There was an increase of Rs. 12,488 in the revenue under this head which is generally attributed to a closer supervision over registration and to the realisation of arrears. The increase is satisfactory; for there is little doubt that in many Municipalities the receipts under this head are less than they ought to be.

Tax on professions and trades.

181. The comparatively small revenue from this source, in which 25 Municipalities have no share, shows an increase of Rs. 7,328. This increase was distributed among all the Divisions except Orissa and Chota Nagpur, and was largest in the Presidency Division (Rs. 4,012), occurring particularly in the Municipalities which are adjacent to Calcutta.

Tolls on roads and ferries.

182. Nowhere in the Province are tolls levied on roads, but an income is derived from ferries in 51 Municipalities. The revenue under this head increased from Rs. 1,35,460 to Rs. 1,45,347, which increase was shared by all the Divisions except those of Burdwan and the Presidency, where small decreases occurred.

Water-rate.

183. This rate was in force in 12 Municipalities against 10 in the previous year, being levied for the first time in the South Suburban and Garden Reach Municipalities. The total income amounted to Rs. 2,85,248, an increase of Rs. 25,900 over that of last year, which was shared by all the ten Municipalities where the rate had previously been in force. The increase is variously attributed to extension of the areas under supply, to better collections and to revision of assessment. The Kurseong Municipality, having extended its water-supply system, obtained the sanction of Government to levy a water-rate, which has been imposed from the commencement of the current year.

Lighting rate.

184. This rate is levied only in the towns of Howrah and Darjeeling. The total receipts fell from Rs. 85,845 to Rs. 83,998, a decline of Rs. 1,847.

Conservancy, including scavenging and latrine rates.

185. The revenue under this head was Rs. 8,24,749, which is an improvement to the extent of Rs. 49,006 over that of the previous year. The increase, which was most marked in the Municipalities of Howrah (Rs. 8,653), Cossipore-Chitpur (Rs. 3,842) and Narainganj (Rs. 2,860), is generally attributed to improved collections, revision of assessment and to a further extension of the provisions of Part IX of the Act, which, however, is not yet in force in many towns where its provisions would be most salutary.

186. The total income from this source, which amounted to Rs. 6,10,695, shows an increase of Rs. 31,748 as compared with the previous year. The increase was shared by several Municipalities and was most marked in Darbhanga, Arrah, Cuttack and Dinajpur. Revised assessments and improved collections generally account for the enhanced receipts. Tax on persons according to their circumstances and property.

187. The total receipts rose from Rs. 3,24,583 to Rs. 3,49,923. The contributions amounted to Rs. 2,31,382 for medical purposes, Rs. 5,291 for education, and Rs. 1,13,250 for general purposes. Grants from Provincial and Local Funds, etc.

188. Among the most important instances of private liberality mentioned in the Divisional reports were the construction and endowment of a charitable dispensary by the sons and heirs of the late Rai Surjya Narain Singh Bahadur at Karangarh in Bhagalpur, and a liberal contribution from Babu Ram Chandra of Kishanganj in Purnea for the construction of a charitable dispensary in that town. Liberality on the part of private individuals.

EXPENDITURE.

189. The total expenditure incurred during the year by the several Municipalities in the Province was Rs. 53,85,903, against Rs. 47,53,072 in the previous year. The large increase of Rs. 6,32,831 was due mainly to an increase of expenditure incurred on water-supply (Rs. 73,302), conservancy including road-cleaning and watering (Rs. 50,092), interest on debt (Rs. 43,968), Hospitals and Dispensaries (Rs. 41,010), roads (Rs. 24,368) and refunds (Rs. 15,256). The items "Repayment of loans" and "Advances" under the head "Extraordinary and Debt" also show increases of Rs. 1,37,307 and Rs. 3,47,458, respectively. Expenditure.

There was a marked decline under the heads of "Police" (Rs. 26,865), "Drainage" (Rs. 4,194) and "Public Works—Stores" (Rs. 4,072). Investments and deposits also show decreases of Rs. 70,815 and Rs. 63,872, respectively. Compared with the previous year, however, there was no great variation in the percentages which the expenditure under each of the principal heads bore to the total outlay (excluding "Debt" and "Suspense" heads), save that establishment charges fell from 12·0 to 10·3 and the percentage of expenditure on water-supply rose from 5·8 to 9·8.

190. The total expenditure (Rs. 4,19,897) on office and collection establishment shows this year a comparatively small increase of Rs. 2,763, while the percentage of expenditure on this head to ordinary income is considerably lower than that of last year. Office and collection establishment.

191. The expenditure (Rs. 27,581) under "Prevention of fires" shows a slight increase of Rs. 228. As in previous years the greater portion of the charge was incurred in the Municipalities adjoining Calcutta, which are served by the Metropolitan Fire-Brigade and contribute to its cost. Prevention of fire and Street lighting.

The expenditure under "Street Lighting" rose from Rs. 2,39,449 to Rs. 2,42,411.

192. The aggregate expenditure under this head amounted to Rs. 4,36,370, an increase on last year's expenditure of Rs. 73,302. The increased cost occurred almost entirely under capital outlay, maintenance charges remaining practically stationary. It was shared by the Municipalities of Howrah (Rs. 42,500), South Suburbs (Rs. 28,750), Nasirabad (Rs. 18,462), Berhampore (Rs. 12,133) and Darjeeling (Rs. 10,597). The largest decrease occurred in the Garden Reach Municipality (Rs. 30,337). The increased expenditure in Howrah, Berhampore and Nasirabad is chiefly attributable to the purchase of new machinery. In the South Suburbs it was due to the completion of the filtered water scheme and in Darjeeling to further progress in the new scheme for increasing the water-supply of the town. A comparatively small capital outlay was incurred in Garden Reach, where the works for the extension of the supply from the Calcutta mains were practically completed in the preceding year. Water-supply.

In Burdwan a proposal is under contemplation for the extension of the filtered water-supply to the areas on the other side of the river Banka. The question of introducing a filtered water-supply into the Asansol Municipality is also under consideration. A scheme for the extension of the filtered water-supply and house services in the Manicktolla Municipality was sanctioned during

the year 1902-1903; and a lakh of rupees was borrowed from Government to meet the cost; but as the Corporation of Calcutta was unable to sanction any increase over the existing supply, the scheme had to be abandoned for the present and the loan was refunded. The filtered water-supply scheme for the South Suburban Municipality was completed; but similar difficulties regarding the supply of water from the Calcutta mains prevented its utilisation during the year 1903-1904. These difficulties, it is hoped, will shortly be surmounted by means of the extensions which the Corporation have recently undertaken for the increase of the daily quantity of water delivered into the town. In the three Mill Municipalities of Titagarh, Garulia and Bhatpara the projects described in paragraph 192 of last year's report continue to make good progress. The work in connection with the water scheme for Titagarh, under which a supply of filtered water is to be obtained, free of cost, from the local mills, was taken up towards the end of the year, and was completed after its close. All the preliminary measures for carrying out a similar scheme in the Bhatpara Municipality have been taken. In Garulia pipes were laid, and hydrants erected; and the work is expected to be completed shortly.

The new scheme for increasing the water-supply of the Darjeeling town was brought into operation during the year. A site was acquired for a new reservoir and a system of filtration in lieu of the existing system of settling tanks is now under trial by the conversion of one of the settling tanks into a filter-bed. Some difficulties have been experienced at Kurseong owing to the drying up of the springs from which the supply of the town is procured. A project is now under contemplation for a connection with a new spring situated at a distance of four miles and-a-half from the town, but the scheme is at present in its initial stages and has not yet come before Government. In other localities also new schemes are in contemplation. Estimates are being prepared for a filtered water-supply project for Barisal. The Municipal Commissioners of Gaya have for some time been considering a scheme for providing water-works for their town. For this purpose they have already collected a sum of Rs. 1,38,642, but their funds are not yet sufficient to enable them to take up the work. In Monghyr a scheme for obtaining a supply of water from the Ganges is under preparation in which it is hoped that the Railway community at Jamalpur may join; and private contributions amounting to over a lakh of rupees have already been promised. To commemorate the occasion of the Lieutenant-Governor's visit to Daltonganj a proposal was made to install a water-supply system in that town by connection of the Municipal mains with the Railway water-works; the bulk of the cost has already been subscribed and the work is now in progress. From the Divisional reports it appears, moreover, that considerable activity was displayed during the year in several Municipalities in excavating tanks and sinking masonry and tube-wells and in improving the already existing sources of water-supply.

The water-works in some of the large towns still continue to cause trouble. In Howrah their administration was, as usual, excellent, and the cost for maintenance works out so low as 1·3 annas per 1,000 gallons delivered. The purity of the water was well maintained; and the daily average supply was 10·8 gallons per head of the population. The Burdwan Municipality, which received unfavourable notice last year, is to be congratulated on a decided improvement in the management of its water-works, which has been particularly marked in the few months succeeding the close of the year under report. The machinery and filters are in good order; due economy is exercised in working charges, as is evidenced by the average cost of 2 annas per 1,000 gallons; and the water has been brought to a high standard of purity, mainly by the exertions of the Civil Surgeon who has adopted the expedient of treating it with alum cake. On the other hand, the difficulties have increased at Bhagalpur and Berhampore, particularly during the dry season. The main stream of the rivers had receded from the in-take; and portable engine-driving centrifugal pumps had to be provided, with the assistance of Government in each case. In both towns the filter-beds were sadly neglected; the quality of the water supplied was most unsatisfactory; and in Berhampore the cost of maintenance was as high as 6·6 annas per 1,000 gallons. The Commissioner of the Bhagalpur Division reports that the water-works of Bhagalpur form a serious burden on the general revenues of the Municipality, and consequently hamper

their activity in every other direction. The position is in fact so serious that Government has recently appointed a Committee to investigate the system, and to devise measures for its improvement. Elsewhere the position is not so serious, though at Nasirabad the filter-beds were not in as good order as they might be owing to the want of pebbles and coarse sand, and the cost of maintenance was as high as 4·5 annas per 1,000 gallons. At Arrah and Dacca the water was pure, though the supply was small. The pumping plant of all the water-works was inspected twice during the year by Messrs. James Simpson & Co. and found to be in a satisfactory condition.

With the object of relieving Municipal Commissioners of duties of a technical and generally difficult nature, they have been empowered to appoint Committees to act as their agents and expert advisers in the management of their water-works, whose members are to be responsible to the Municipal Commissioners for the due performance of the duties entrusted to and accepted by them. In order that the relative position of the Municipal Commissioners and their agents, the Water-works Committees and their respective powers and duties may be clearly understood, Government has, in consultation with its professional and legal advisers, framed a set of rules under section 69B (ii) of the Act for the guidance of Municipal Commissioners in the matter of their water-supply. So far two Municipalities only, those at Arrah and Darjeeling, have adopted the rules and appointed Committees. Other Municipalities, however, have wisely adopted a somewhat similar system for the administration of their water-works.

Drainage.

193. The total expenditure was Rs. 1,67,173, which is less by Rs. 4,194 than that of last year. The decrease occurred under capital outlay, maintenance charges showing a small increase of Rs. 1,806, and was mainly due to the fact that several large schemes of capital outlay had been undertaken in the preceding year.

Schemes for the improvement of drainage have been prepared for the Municipalities of Hooghly-Chinsura, Utterpara, Cossipore-Chitpur, Budge-Budge, Naihati, Bettiah, Puri and Cuttack, and are under preparation in many other Municipalities, notably those in the 24-Parganas, Murshidabad and Nadia districts. The project for the drainage of Puri, which is a portion of the whole scheme outlined in paragraph 203 of last year's Report for the general improvement of the sanitation of the chief resort of pilgrims in the Province, was designed by an officer of the Public Works Department specially deputed for the purpose. The same officer was subsequently entrusted with the supervision of certain other important drainage schemes, including that of Burdwan, but, unfortunately his services could not long be spared. The Burdwan scheme, which is estimated to cost Rs. 1,75,000, has long hung fire on account of the embarrassed condition of the municipal finances. This, however, has recently much improved by reason of the reduction of annual loan charges, and the survey for the scheme is being rapidly pushed on. Private liberality and local effort will receive the assistance of Government; and there is now great hope that the scheme may be found practicable. A joint scheme for the improvement of the Khurda Khal, whereby the drainage of the South Barrackpore, Titagarh and Panihati Municipalities is to be effected, was completed during the year; and a scheme for the improvement of the Bagjala Khal, prepared by the Public Works Department, is under the consideration of the Sanitary Board. The drainage system of the Kurseong town is reported to be very defective; but the Commissioners must materially improve their resources before they can do much to improve it. The scheme for the drainage of Dacca awaits the completion of the survey of the town. No expenditure under this head was incurred by eleven Municipalities, viz., Ghatal, Bhadreswar, Uluberia, Tollygunge, Halishahar, Budge-Budge, Meherpur, Dinapore, Hajipur, Nawabganj and Raghunathpur.

Conservancy, including road cleaning, road watering and latrines.

194. It is noticeable that the expenditure under this head has increased by Rs. 50,092, an increase that is most marked in the Burdwan and Presidency Divisions where the additional expenditure incurred amounts to Rs. 28,246 and Rs. 11,390, respectively. Howrah alone accounts for an increase of Rs. 21,598, which was due to the strengthening of the conservancy staff and to the purchase of new carts and animals. A new conservancy line from Lillooah to Belgachia is also under construction. Cossipore-Chitpur incurred an increased

charge of Rs. 10,557, mainly in the acquisition of 30 bighas of land to extend the present trenching ground.

The expenditure on conservancy exceeded 50 per cent. of the total expenditure in four towns, viz., Hooghly-Chinsura (53·48), Bhadreswar (51·39), Halishahar (56·4), and Noakhali (51·3).

The work of improving the *bustis* in some of the crowded Municipalities in the district of the 24-Parganas, referred to in last year's Report, was continued during the year. The Magistrate reports that energetic action has been or is being taken in Bhatpara, Garulia, Cossipore-Chitpur, Titagarh, Garden Reach and Manicktolla; and the Commissioner adds that the work already done in this direction has been most valuable. It is encouraging to note that since the improvements were effected sic[k]ness has considerably declined in these *bustis*.

Hospitals and Dispensaries.

195. The expenditure under this head amounted to Rs. 5,10,329, an increase of Rs. 41,010 on that of the previous year. Plague charges, which were formerly included under this head, are now shown separately. These amounted to Rs. 23,024, so that the actual increase is much higher. It is shared by all the Divisions, except the Presidency and Orissa, and was largest in the Rajshahi Division, where it amounted to Rs. 20,364. The expenditure at Rangpur was no less than Rs. 25,184 in excess of that of last year, and was due to the construction of a new Dispensary building. Where marked decreases occur they are generally explained by the fact that large capital charges had been incurred in the preceding year. There is no doubt that the duty of providing medical relief is fully appreciated by the generality of Municipal bodies, though among the smaller ones ten, against six in the previous year, incurred no expenditure under this head. Charges on account of plague were incurred in a greater or lesser degree by 43 towns. The largest expenditure under this head is returned by the Municipalities of Arrah (Rs. 3,737) and Howrah (Rs. 3,024), while at some places it was merely nominal.

Vaccination.

196. The expenditure under this head (Rs. 21,628) shows a small increase of Rs. 80. The outturn of work is generally satisfactory.

Markets, slaughter-houses, etc.

197. A subject to which the attention of Municipal Commissioners has been lately directed is that of the prevention of the spread of tuberculosis by the agency of food and drink. In a Circular No. 2M., dated 15th January 1904, Government drew attention to the dangers arising from unregulated sources of food-supply and pointed out the powers conferred by the law upon Municipal authorities enabling them to enforce proper sanitary precautions in markets, dairies and slaughter-houses. This warning has received marked attention, and in many towns to which the legal sections in question have not yet been extended, steps are being taken to put them in force. In several of the larger Municipalities whose funds permit of this extra charge, Sanitary Inspectors have been appointed for the more effective supervision of places where food and drink are prepared and sold; in others the Municipal Commissioners themselves have undertaken the duty. The expenditure under this head increased from Rs. 16,766 in 1902-1903 to Rs. 23,753 in the year under review.

Public Works.

198. The expenditure under this head amounted to Rs. 7,74,284, an excess over last year's expenditure of Rs. 28,436. The increase is most marked under the sub-head of roads, both construction and repair, on which Rs. 5,58,574 were expended against Rs. 5,34,206 in 1902-1903.

Public Instruction.

199. The total gross expenditure under this head was Rs. 1,44,739, against Rs. 1,37,407 in the previous year. The total expenditure on primary education amounted to Rs. 81,789, which is higher by Rs. 7,774 than that of 1902-1903. The percentage which this expenditure bears to the aggregate ordinary income of the Municipalities in Bengal was 2·8 against 2·7 in 1902-1903, and still falls below the general standard of 3·2 per cent. prescribed by Government. The general conclusion, however, is that education, as a municipal duty, is not by any means neglected, and that adequate provision, consistent with the resources of each Municipality, is made for the most important branches of public instruction.

Loans.

200. Forty-two Municipalities were in debt to Government at the close of the year, and eleven fresh loans, to the total amount of Rs. 2,41,860, were

taken during its course. Howrah obtained a loan of Rs. 1,00,000 for rebuilding the Buckland Bridge and Darjeeling one of Rs. 59,860 for the improvement of the electric installation. The outstanding loan balance of all the Municipalities in debt, that is, their total outstanding debts after deduction of the sums deposited in their Sinking Funds, amounted to Rs. 32,34,373, of which Rs. 32,11,072 are owed to Government. This is nearly 5 lakhs in excess of their ordinary income; but if Howrah is excluded, whose debt amounts to one-half of the whole and whose present financial position is above question, the net indebtedness of the debtor Municipalities is far more than covered by their ordinary income. All the Municipalities paid the interest and instalments on their loans in full and no instance of default occurred.

The Berhampore Municipality is the only one whose solvency has been called in question.

Audit of accounts and embezzlements.

201. Several cases of embezzlement, though generally of small amounts, came to notice during the year, most of them being facilitated by laxity of supervision over the collection establishment. The defalcations occurred in the Municipalities of Bhatpara, Tangail, Noakhali, Chapra, Darbhanga, Bhagalpur and Cuttack. The largest defalcation was reported from Chapra, where the Accounts Department was found to be in a state of complete confusion. This has necessitated the appointment by Government, under section 82 of the Act, of an officer to examine and reorganise the accounts system of this Municipality.

Working of the Porters and Dandiwallas' Act.

202. The Act was in force during the year only in the Darjeeling Municipality. The total number of porters and dandiwallas registered was 859 against 858 in the previous year, and the total cost of working the Act was Rs. 245 against Rs. 272 in 1902-1903. The Act was carefully worked, a special officer being employed for the purpose; and the results were satisfactory, as the number of prosecutions declined and no licenses were cancelled. Since the close of the year the provisions of the Act have been extended to the Kurseong Municipality.

The Howrah Municipality.

203. In several of the foregoing paragraphs details of the administration of the Howrah Municipality have been singled out for special mention. The scale of its administration differs widely from that of an ordinary mufassal Municipality; its size and character render it only second in importance to Calcutta; and the lines on which its municipal problems must be dealt with resemble closely those followed in the neighbouring metropolis. With regard to the financial condition of this Municipality there is little to add to the remarks made in last year's Report. The percentage of collections to current demand is less, it is true, by 6 per cent. than that of 1902-1903, but this is mainly due to the fact that there were far fewer arrears to collect. It was shown last year how, in the five years preceding the outstanding balance had been reduced from 50·9 to 16·9 per cent. of the current demand. In the year just past it was still further reduced to 12·04 per cent.

The material improvements in the Municipality are no less satisfactory. The administration of its water-works and the progress of its drainage have already been described. With regard to its sanitary condition, the Sanitary Commissioner remarked in his last report on the town: "I cannot but be struck by the very considerable improvement that has been effected in many respects, particularly in the conservancy arrangements and improvement of *bustis*." The latter is a point which requires the most careful attention, and much may be done, on the model of the plan adopted in Calcutta, by the anticipatory alignment of all areas in which new *bustis* are likely to spring up with the object of preventing the construction of congested and airless habitations. The negotiations for the introduction of electric traction are making satisfactory progress; the Buckland Bridge is being rebuilt in conjunction with the East Indian Railway Company; and the lighting of the town has made considerable strides and may shortly be still further improved by the substitution of electricity for gas. These are the most prominent improvements effected in the year, but meanwhile minor requirements have not been overlooked, and in every department a steady and uninterrupted rate of progress has been maintained.

THE CALCUTTA MUNICIPALITY.

[The Administration Report of the Calcutta Municipality for the year 1903-1904; Judicial and Administrative statistics of British India, Section XVII].

General.

204. The year was marked by a decided increase in the interest taken by the Commissioners in the administration of Municipal affairs.

The Annual Administration Report for the year was forwarded to Government on the 4th August, and the review of the General Committee followed it on the 27th of the same month. The Corporation then appointed a Special Committee to review the report on their behalf. The review of this Committee, but in an abbreviated and amended form, was adopted by the Corporation on the 29th September and reached Government on the 1st October. The criticisms contained in this review have been fully dealt with in the Resolution recorded by Government on the year's Report, and need not be reproduced at length here. The final recommendation of the Special Committee, that the Corporation should be restored to the position which it held before the passing of the Act of 1899, did not represent the views of the Corporation as a whole, and although their action in drawing attention to administrative defects in the year's working was endorsed by the general body of Commissioners, they altogether failed to recognise the great improvements that have been effected in every Department. Government has expressed itself as fully satisfied that the period since the passing of the Act of 1899 has been one of continuous, and for the most part successful, effort after reform, and considers the question not to be whether the steps taken should be retraced, but whether anything can be done to quicken and accelerate the rate of progress.

Meetings, Special Committees, etc.

205. The General Committee met 53 times during the year, the average attendance being 10. Thirty-two Special Committees were appointed for various purposes, as also a number of Sub-Committees. The Special and Sub-Committees held in all 226 meetings. The Special Committees are reported by the Chairman to have rendered great assistance in the administration of the markets, squares, slaughter-houses and *dhobikhanas*.

The relative functions of the Corporation and of the General Committee were closely examined during the year, and the proper distribution of business between these two co-ordinate authorities was more strictly regulated in accordance with the provisions of the Act.

Finance.

206. The average annual increase in the demand on account of the consolidated rate in the last five years has been Rs. 1,33,686, while the collections of the License Department during the same period have made an average addition to the revenue of Rs. 30,129. Moreover in the eight years 1905-1906 to 1912-1913, the Government loan and a number of debenture loans will be paid off; and the cessation of these payments will set free amounts aggregating Rs. 9,52,310, a sum sufficient to pay the interest and sinking fund on a loan of 1·9 crores of rupees. In addition to this the Corporation has a reserve of taxation on which it can draw; for the consolidated rate, which at present is levied at 19½ per cent., may legally be raised to 23 per cent.

Although, however, the financial position of the Corporation is without doubt thoroughly sound, they will nevertheless have to exercise the most careful economy, and to forego all capital expenditure which is not absolutely necessary, if they are to escape the necessity for enhancing the consolidated rate in the immediate future. The large sum referred to in the preceding paragraph, which will become available through the falling in of loans in the course of the next eight years, will in itself unfortunately not obviate the need for raising the rate, because the greater portion of it, viz., Rs. 8,39,560, will be set free during the second half of the period in question, and only Rs. 1,12,750 will fall in during the four years, 1905-1906 to 1908-1909. In this connection it may be mentioned that when the scheme for the improvement of Calcutta was discussed some years ago, it was anticipated that the rate would have to be raised almost immediately, and that of the 3½ per cent. margin 2 per cent. would be required to pay the interest and sinking fund charges for the loans that would be required for carrying out the schemes for drainage and water-supply. Owing to the large additions to the revenues in the last few years, the necessity for an enhancement of the rate has been postponed; but as already stated the utmost care and prudence will be required if the next four years are to be bridged over.

The following figures, from which all non-recurring items have been eliminated, exhibit the revenue receipts and expenditure of the past five years and show more clearly than words the need for present economy:—

	Receipt. (In thousands	Expenditure. of rupees.)
	Rs.	Rs.
1900-1901 ...	57,53	55,18
1901-1902 ...	62,09	57,68
1902-1903 ...	58,32	60,30
1903-1904 ...	61,51	64,62
1904-1905 (estimate)	64,37	66,37

The greater part of the deficits have hitherto been made good by reductions in the opening balance; but this resource will not serve much longer, because the estimated closing balance for the current year is only Rs. 4,26,000, and the statutory minimum closing balance is two lakhs. The extent to which borrowing is responsible for the situation depicted above will be apparent from the following statement showing the charges during the same period on account of interest and sinking fund:—

	Rs.
1900-1901 ...	20,24,000
1901-1902 ...	19,49,000
1902-1903 ...	22,54,000
1903-1904 ...	23,15,000
1904-1905 (estimate)	25,42,000

From the application submitted by the Corporation for permission to raise the loan which they have recently placed upon the market, it appears that loans amounting to Rs. 26,84,903 still remain to be raised before the drainage and water-supply schemes can be carried to completion.

Accounts Department.

207. The attempts made to place the Accounts Department on a satisfactory basis had not by the end of the year proved successful. The experience of another year showed that the approval accorded to the new scheme, drawn up on the recommendations of two Government officers lent to the Corporation, was premature; and that it has not furnished information of the state of the finances sufficiently early and accurate for effective action to be taken. The whole subject was, however, dealt with by the General Committee some time after the close of the year. The accounts have now been brought up to date, and it has been decided to raise the pay of the post of Chief Accountant. This will enable the Corporation to secure the services of a qualified officer, and it is hoped that the reorganisation of the Department will soon be completed on satisfactory lines.

In connection with the subject of accounts, Government has suggested that a separate loans budget should be prepared and passed by the Corporation. Such a budget can be prepared separately from and in advance of the ordinary budget, which must be put off till near the close of the year, in order that it may be based on the latest information available. This procedure, which is followed by the Local Government, would not only secure the effective control of the Corporation, but would avoid the difficulties which have hitherto arisen in obtaining the sanction of the Government of India in time for the loans to be floated when the market is most favourable.

Collection and License Departments.

208. During the year the Collector's Department not only maintained but improved upon the high standard of efficiency shown in the previous year. The current collections on net demands amounted to as much as 99·22 per cent. against 99·08 and 98·33 in the two preceding years. It is noticeable that resort to coercive measures was almost as infrequent as it was last year, being adopted in only 35 as against 32 cases. The Suit Department, which is now a branch of the Collector's office, have duties to perform, which are necessarily slow to secure results and which cannot be gauged by any numerical standard. The

department succeeded, however, in reducing the balance outstanding against it at the beginning of the year from Rs. 2,45,949 to Rs. 2,12,292, of which Rs. 1,86,841 were old arrears. The License Department, whose re-organisation was only carried out towards the middle of the year under review, showed satisfactory results in a marked increase of collections, though the decrease in the amount of taxes realised on animals and vehicles in a city constantly growing in population and wealth points to the necessity for a stricter administration of the law in this direction.

Assessment, Secretary's and Building Departments.

209. The Assessment Department also showed satisfactory results. The assessing staff succeeded in completing the revaluation of four wards of the town and at the same time in working off the greater portion of its arrears. The net increase effected in the total valuation of the town amounted to Rs. 7,67,761, a rate of increase which is in advance by about 2 lakhs of the average progressive rate of the last decade. In the Secretary's Department the work has of late years considerably increased, but it has been promptly and punctually despatched. Against the Building Department some complaints were recorded, particularly in the matter of delays in the grant of sanction to build. The number of such sanctions, however, increased from 3,604 in 1902-1903 to 4,117 in 1903-1904; and a scheme is now under consideration for the reorganisation of this Department and for improving the pay and status of its staff.

Busti and City Improvement Department.

210. Much good work had been done in ridding Calcutta of many very objectionable and insanitary *bustis*, and the work is being carefully and methodically controlled. One result has been the replacement of *bustis* by masonry buildings, because the schemes for the former will not always pay if carried out. No part of the operations of the Department has been more wisely conceived or more carefully executed than the alignment of new *bustis* in the hitherto unoccupied areas in the outskirts of the city. A large area has been carefully surveyed and plotted out with roads which will secure convenient access and healthy circulation of air to the *bustis* which are springing up in these tracts. A new Calcutta has in fact been laid out in advance.

Suburban Drainage.

211. The general approval of the Government of Bengal was conveyed to the suburban drainage scheme in January 1897. Departures in a greater or less degree from the original scheme were, however, inevitable when detailed plans and estimates were worked out; and it was not clearly laid down in the Act, or established by precedent, that the sanction of Government to such departures was necessary. In April 1899 the Government of Bengal laid down that detailed estimates of portions of the project must be submitted for its approval as the plans and estimates were worked out. Meanwhile an important change—the laying of the sewers at a lower level—had been partially given effect to; but, after a careful examination, Mr. Buckley, then Chief Engineer to the Government of Bengal, declared the change to be an improvement. A much more serious cause of confusion was the action of the Accounts Department of that time in refusing to pass bills so that the contractors were unable to proceed with portions of the work. Ultimately the work on certain contracts was altogether stopped; and Mr. Buckley, who was called in to arbitrate, stated that the questions in issue were such that, if they had arisen in connection with Government work, they would have been disposed of by the Engineers in charge. He therefore recommended that the Account rules should be amended so as to confer similar discretionary powers on the Engineers of the Corporation. From the Chairman's report it appears that the work on main sewer No. I, which had been interrupted in 1900, was not resumed till October 1903.

The scheme for the drainage of the suburbs consists of the following three main items:—

(1) The sewering of the area on the west of Tolly's Nala, *i.e.*, Alipore and Kidderpur.

(2) The sewering of the area on the east of Tolly's Nala, *i.e.*, Bhowanipur and Ballygunge.

(3) The provision of a storm-water outfall channel and reservoir for the surface drainage on the east of Tolly's Nala.

Connected with the suburban drainage scheme and in progress under the same series of contracts, are certain supplementary projects for the drainage of the town area proper, which also fall under three main heads,—

(1) The construction of a storm-water outfall reservoir and channel for the town area.

(2) The construction of a channel which will carry the combined sewage of the town and suburbs.

(3) The construction of a high level sewer from the Palmer's Bridge pumping-station to the combined sewage channel at Ballygunge.

The sewerage of the area west of Tolly's Nala has already been completed, but cannot be utilised until the syphon under Tolly's Nala and the Ballygunge pumping-station are finished. The Engineer has reported that great difficulties have been met by the contractors in constructing this syphon, and that it is anticipated that the work will not be completed for several months to come. The rest of the work is in various stages of completion. Out of 39,136 feet of main sewers, 8,156 feet were completed in the year and about 17,000 feet remain to be laid; while out of 129,683 feet of branches, 11,080 feet were laid in the past 12 months, and 86,500 feet remain yet to be completed. The Budge-Budge Road pumping-station is apparently not sufficiently advanced to permit of the erection of the machinery which is ready at the site; and the Ballygunge pumping-station has only recently been commenced. The excavations for the outfall reservoirs are now in progress; and it is expected that all those works will be completed before the end of 1905.

From the account given in the two preceding paragraphs, it will be apparent that large portions of the scheme have been completed, but cannot be utilized until other portions on which work had been stopped can be carried out. The completion of these portions is therefore a matter of very great urgency because, meanwhile, the Corporation are getting no return for the sums they are paying as interest on the loans by which the completed works were carried out. These important works are, however, being vigorously pushed forward, and the Drainage Department is one of the most efficient in the Corporation.

212. In connection with the water-supply the most important point to notice is the evidence furnished of the success of the continuous supply system. In the area under constant supply the average daily consumption was reduced from 31·8 gallons a head in April 1903 to 22·5 gallons in February 1904. It is true that throughout the town, the added area and the suburbs, the average daily consumption during the year was 21·5 gallons a head; but the figure quoted for February 1904 includes the consumption in the area to which the continuous system had been only recently extended, and in which therefore the waste and leakage were probably enormous. Water-supply.

During the year the progress in the introduction of the continuous supply system was satisfactory, the population supplied under that system having increased from 107,892 to 201,898; but it is obvious that the system cannot be extended throughout Calcutta within the time originally contemplated in the Act. Two reasons are assigned for this, namely, (1) the insufficiency of the present water-supply to stand the strain of the immediate increase in consumption that would occur if the system were suddenly extended to a large area, and (2) the postponement of work in connection with the distribution scheme until the question has been decided whether distribution should be direct from pumping stations or from an overhead reservoir. As regards (1) the Corporation have recently sanctioned a scheme to increase the daily supply by 6,000,000 gallons to be effected by the erection of new pumps at Pulta. The other matter has been under the consideration of a Special Committee which has recently advised the Corporation to submit the whole question to expert advice in England.

The unfiltered water-supply has for some time past given rise to anxiety. The large increase in the number of connected privies has materially reduced the pressure in certain localities; and the result has been that the supply of unfiltered water in certain parts of the town has proved at times

insufficient to fill up the privy cisterns. It has been ascertained that the defect is due to two remediable causes, the smallness of some of the distributing mains and a breakdown of the pumps at Mallik's Ghât. A proposal is under consideration for linking up the mains supplied by the Mallik's Ghât and Watgunge pumping stations, in order to minimise the inconvenience resulting from a breakdown at either station. A scheme has also been prepared for the substitution of larger mains for which it is hoped that provision may be made next year; and a special repair staff under a competent Engineer has been employed at Mallik's Ghât with the result that already a great improvement in the pressure has been effected. Owing to defects in the method of distribution, pressure is still low in certain streets and lanes, which has given rise to a temporary check in the policy of compelling the substitution of connected for service privies; but the Chairman at present issues no notices for this purpose till he is satisfied that the pressure in the particular locality is sufficient. It is understood that when the causes of the check are removed the system will be rapidly extended.

New Municipal Offices. Miscellaneous Improvements.

213. The new Central Office building, which was commenced in October 1902, is approaching completion. The east and west wings are now practically complete, but the south block has not yet been roofed. The cost of the work done by the contractors up to the end of March was Rs. 3,62,000. New offices were built for Districts I and IV, and the latter was opened by the Lieutenant-Governor just before the close of the year.

The two squares recently acquired in Obhoy Churn Mitter's Street and Ramkanto Bose's Street were improved and enclosed. During the year one of the worst plague spots in the city was removed by the opening up of a large public square in Jorabagan, where land was acquired at a cost of Rs. 2,13,000. Arrangements are now being made to level this square and enclose it by a railing. The Commissioners have also sanctioned the acquisition of land in Ekbalpore, at a cost of Rs. 33,950, for a public square in that locality.

Six insanitary burial-grounds were closed during the year, including the old Durgapore burial-ground, which had been the subject of much litigation in the Alipore courts. The land recently acquired for Muhammadan burial-grounds at Gobra and Bagmari has been taken over and prepared at a considerable cost. The land acquired in the previous year for an extension of the Lower Circular Road Christian Cemetery was, during the year under review, properly prepared and enclosed and handed over to the Christian Burial Board. An expenditure of Rs. 31,700 was sanctioned for raising the level of part of the area which has been taken up for a new Christian cemetery at Jadabpore; the work is in progress. Tenders for the construction of a crematorium of the latest improved design have been invited.

Additions and alterations were made to the Hogg Market at a cost of nearly Rs. 80,000. The additional accommodation thus provided yielded an increased revenue of about half-a-lakh of rupees. As the additions made have not sufficed to meet the demand for stalls in the market, land has been acquired for the erection of an additional eastern wing, the cost of which is estimated at about Rs. 2,75,000. The Lansdowne Market, which was opened during the year, has so far not made a very encouraging start. A sum of Rs. 4,72,466 was expended in repairing the roads, and large sums were also spent in paving some of the footpaths and in redressing others with *moorum*, while a number of roads were kerbed and channelled. Land has been acquired at a cost of Rs. 57,000 for the extension of the *dhobikhana* at Kasiabagan, and for the construction of a new road through what will be the Woodburn Park. The entire *busti* to the east of the Hogg Market has been acquired at a cost of Rs. 1,68,000 and the surroundings of the Market and Municipal office have been completely altered by the widening of Municipal Office Street, the paving of its foot-paths and the construction of new Hogg Street.

Public Health.

214. The death-rate was 35·1 per mille as against 37 in the preceding year, the rate excluding plague deaths being 25·4 per mille. Cholera accounted for nearly 2,000 deaths, but this was below the average in spite of the fact that the mortality from this disease for the year was above the average in the province, and was specially severe in the district of the 24-Parganas. The mortality from malarial fever has diminished, but tuberculosis has increased

during the last few years. The decreased mortality from malaria may doubtless be traced in part to the filling up of insanitary wells and tanks.

The birth-rate registered rose from 14·2 to 15·5 per mille: even the improved figure cannot, however, be held to be at all accurate. The experiment of appointing a staff of peripatetic Sub-Registrars to collect information of births proved very successful, the number of births registered in the area under experiment being 51 per cent. above the average of the past three years, and it is proposed to extend the system to the other three districts. Prosecutions by the Sanitary Inspectors resulted in the imposition of fines amounting to Rs. 30,861. The Food Inspectors did useful work, and destroyed large quantities of unwholesome food.

Conservancy.

215. The system of conservancy was thoroughly discussed during the year, and it was eventually decided to create a separate Cleansing Department under a responsible head, who should work directly under the orders of the Chairman. Details of the scheme, however, still remain to be worked out, and the head of the Department has as yet not been appointed. In December 1903 a special expenditure of Rs. 21,000 was sanctioned for the maintenance of additional establishments in the northern wards of the town, for special conservancy and cleansing of *bustis*, as a precautionary measure against plague.

Puri Lodging-house Act.

[Reports from the Commissioners of Divisions for 1903-1904 on the working of the Puri Lodging-house Act in the various places to which it has been extended.]

Working of the Act.

216. Towards the close of the year 1902-1903, the Puri Lodging-house Act was withdrawn from Uluberia in the Burdwan Division. With this exception it was in force in the same towns and areas during the year under review as in the preceding year. The Act worked satisfactorily during the year in all the places in which it was in force.

Licensed Lodging-houses.

217. The year showed a marked decline in the number of lodging-houses licensed and to a less extent in the accommodation for pilgrims. The number of lodging-houses fell from 3,038 to 2,045, or by 33 per cent., and the number of pilgrims for whom accommodation was provided fell from 72,426 to 67,863, or by 6 per cent. The decrease is due to the large influx of pilgrims to Puri in 1902-1903, which led to the licensing of a considerable number of additional lodging-houses with scanty accommodation. In 1903-1904 the pilgrim traffic reverted to its normal condition. At Sitakund in the district of Chittagong, however, for which the year was auspicious, the gathering of pilgrims was large. The number of lodging-houses consequently rose to 280, and accommodation was provided for 7,016 pilgrims, the figures for the preceding year being 25 and 2,430 respectively.

Public health.

218. The health of the pilgrims was generally satisfactory, and in every case there was an improvement on the figures of the previous year. The total number of deaths from all causes was 528 against 1,034 in 1902-1903. At Puri the largest number of deaths was from cholera, but the outbreak was not a serious one.

219. The sanitation of Puri engaged the earnest attention of Government during the year. On the occasion of the Lieutenant-Governor's visit to Puri in November 1903, he held a Conference with the local officers for the purpose of settling the main lines on which improvement should proceed. The most important decision arrived at by the Conference was that an expert should be placed on special duty to work out a complete system of drainage for the town, to make experiments for devising a good system of water-supply by means of tube wells or otherwise, and to provide means for the periodical cleansing of the sacred tanks. An Assistant Engineer was deputed to carry out the work, and his report is now under consideration by Government. Enquiries were also instituted in order to secure the improvement of the lodging-houses by means of an improved type of private latrine, and the adoption of a standard plan for new lodging-houses. The introduction of radical schemes of sanitary reform will involve heavy expenditure, and it has been suggested that the

necessary funds may be found either from an increase in the lodging-house tax or from a tax on pilgrims. The consideration of the financial aspect of the schemes has, however, been deferred until the details of the schemes themselves are settled.

Income and Expenditure.

220. The total income of the year excluding the opening balance of Rs. 66,364 as also the balance of a special donation given by Babu Kanai Lal Bogla of Calcutta for the construction of a rest-house at Puri was Rs. 69,727 which is very little above the income of the year 1901-1902, and much below that of the year 1902-1903. The total expenditure amounted to Rs. 1,11,708, but this includes a sum of Rs. 35,000 which was invested in Government three-half per cent. promissory notes to the credit of the Puri Lodging-house Fund, so that the actual expenditure was Rs. 76,708. The reduction in ordinary income was due to the decline in the number of pilgrims at Puri. There was some increase in expenditure, but the closing balance of the fund remains very high. It is likely however that the Fund will have to meet heavy expenditure on sanitation in the near future.

District Boards.

[Divisional Commissioners' Reports on the working of the District Boards in Bengal during the year 1903-1904; Judicial and Administrative Statistics of British India, Section XVIII.]

221. The area controlled by the 42 District Boards in the year was 133,110 square miles, with a population of 68,181,003. The number of Local Boards remained unchanged. The Sadar Local Board at Chapra in the district of Saran was abolished, but a new Local Board was established at Gobindpur in the district of Manbhum. Two Union Committees were established at Aurangabad and Choa in the district of Murshidabad, and one was abolished at Binkar in the same district, the net result being an increase of one.

Constitution of District Boards.

222. The total number of meetings of District Boards held during the year was 593: the number of those which proved abortive or were adjourned for want of a quorum was 51. The average attendance at each meeting was highest in Murshidabad (20·1) and lowest in Jalpaiguri (5·6). The total number of meetings of Local Boards held was 1,257. The highest average attendance was 10·8 and the lowest 2·06. General elections were held in Mymensingh, Backergunge and Patna. In Mymensingh the elections were contested in six and failed in three out of nineteen thanas, while in Backergunge all the ten thana elections were successful. In Patna the election of members of the Bihar Local Board was marked by serious irregularities and second elections had to be held in three thanas.

Union Committees.

223. There are 58 Union Committees in Bengal, with a total membership of 468.

The total income of these bodies was Rs. 22,067 and the total expenditure Rs. 18,361. Nineteen Union Committees, including all those in Murshidabad district, expended the whole amount placed at their disposal, and eighteen expended nearly the whole amount. No work was done and no expenditure incurred by the Union Committee at Binodpur in Jessore, which has since been abolished, or by any of the Union Committees in the Orissa Division, which for two years have been in a state of quiescence and can hardly be said to exist. The Khulna Unions are again favourably reported on, and some improvement has been observed in the Burdwan Division. Generally considered, the results are rather better than those of the previous year; but it cannot be said that there has been any marked increase in efficiency. The supervision exercised by Local Boards is reported to be generally ineffective, and in the Local Self-Government Bill now before the Bengal Council provision has been made for placing the Union Committees directly under the control of the District Boards.

Financial results.

224. The District Boards commenced the year with an opening balance of Rs. 23,20,470. Their income amounted to Rs. 84,02,888, the expenditure to Rs. 83,23,188, and the year closed with a credit balance of Rs. 24,00,170, of which Rs. 2,11,736 was due to deposits, and not at the disposal of the Board.

The following table compares the principal heads of income and expenditure of the District Boards for the past two years:—

	1902-1903.	1903-1904.
INCOME.	Rs.	Rs.
Provincial Rates	43,80,832	44,78,981
Interest	40,760	43,696
Police (including Pounds)	4,86,815	4,93,428
Education	95,867	89,351
Medical	51,358	65,312
Scientific and other Minor Departments ...	11,322	20,584
Stationery and Printing	770	804
Miscellaneous	2,13,785	1,95,330
Railways	...	......
Irrigation, Minor Works and Navigation ...	18,105	20,131
Civil Works (including Ferries)	18,94,330	14,22,441
Contributions	5,91,691	10,53,195
Deposits and Advances	14,31,742	5,19,640
Total under above and all other heads ...	92,17,377	84,02,888
EXPENDITURE.		
Administration	3,00,957	3,11,396
Police (Pounds)	24,152	28,416
Marine	9,838	8,216
Education	17,47,945	18,19,584
Medical	3,89,379	4,09,277
Scientific and other Departments	39,327	48,659
Superannuation Allowances and Pensions ...	33,010	32,025
Stationery and Printing	42,980	40,569
Miscellaneous	57,804	42,322
Famine Relief	100	30
Civil Works	45,96,854	48,72,292
Contributions	71,398	62,975
Debt	14,77,263	6,24,163
Interest on Debt	30,907	22,230
Total under above and all other heads ...	88,22,343	83,23,188

Short explanations are given below of important fluctuations in the figures:—

INCOME.

225. The incidence of the cess per head of the population is highest in the Patna Division (1 anna 4 pies) and lowest in the Orissa Division (7 pies), the average for the Province (excluding the Chota Nagpur districts) being one anna. The average incidence of the rate per square mile is Rs. 38-15-4 for 38 districts, and varies from Rs. 54-10-1 in the Patna Division to Rs. 17-13-3 in Orissa. It is at once apparent that some districts are much more heavily taxed than others. In Patna the tax rises as high as Rs. 102-1-5 per square mile, and 2 annas 4 pies per head of the population, while in Dacca it is only Rs. 29-13-11 per square mile and 6 pies per head. On the whole, if Backergunge and the Metropolitan Districts are left out of account, Bihar is much more heavily taxed than Bengal. Provincial rates.

226. Under section 52, clause (3) of the Local Self-Government Act, the receipts under the Cattle Trespass Act, 1871, form one of the assets of the District Fund, and, in order to secure that administrative control should accompany financial responsibility, the control of the pounds was conferred Police.

on the District Boards. Sir Steuart Bayley, in recording the first Resolution on the working of the Boards, stated that he could not doubt that with judicious management the Boards had in the pounds a very fertile source of revenue. This anticipation has unfortunately not been fulfilled. The estimated income of the pounds which was taken into account in the financial settlements with the Boards has increased by only 13 per cent. in 17 years. The inelasticity of this source of revenue is most disappointing and has seriously hampered the educational and medical work of the Boards. Such increase as has occurred has been, moreover, most unevenly distributed. An examination of the figures of the last 16 years shows that in half the districts the income has decreased, while in half it has increased. The district which has been most fortunate is Jalpaiguri, where the average income has been Rs. 15,423 against Rs. 6,145 at which it was estimated. The increase is also large in Dinajpur (Rs. 6,930), Bhagalpur (Rs. 5,857), Mymensingh (Rs. 5,790), Gaya (Rs. 3,560), and Malda (Rs. 3,295). On the other hand in Purnea the average income has only been Rs. 46,894 against the estimate of Rs. 50,559, and in Midnapore, Pabna, and Dacca the average receipts have been less than the estimate by Rs. 3,356, Rs. 3,594, and Rs. 3,331, respectively. It is by no means easy to explain either these variations or the extraordinary differences in the incidence of the pound revenue in the various districts.

One possible explanation is decisively negatived by the figures; for they show that mere multiplication of pounds does little to improve the income. While the number of pounds has risen from 3,121 in 1890-91 to 4,311 in 1903-1904, an increase of 38 per cent., the income has only risen 12 per cent., and the average income per pound has fallen from Rs. 136-1-1 to Rs. 109-7-1. In Nadia, where there is one pound to 11·8 square miles, the income is Rs. 13-7-7 per square mile, but in Muzaffarpur, where there is one pound to 16·8 square miles, it is only Re. 1-14-9. In Purnea with 49·7 square miles to each pound the income per square mile is Rs. 10-2-5; in Saran with 48 square miles to each pound it is only Re. 1-15-1. In the Rajshahi Division with 21·7 square miles to each pound the income is Rs. 5-15-6 to the square mile, and in Chittagong with 19·9 square miles to each pound only Rs. 2-14-4.

Probably no single explanation can be given of these remarkable differences. The decline of the indigo industry has sometimes been suggested as a possible explanation of a falling pound revenue, but the figures do not support this. A more probable explanation is that in some districts the fines for cattle trespass are paid to the zamindar instead of to the District Board to a greater extent than in others.

Education. 227. A decrease of Rs. 7,485 occurred only under the sub-head "Contributions," and is explained by the fact that last year a large Government grant for primary education in the district of Rangpur was shown as a contribution under Education, while this year it has been shown under its proper head "Contribution from Provincial to Local." All the other sub-heads show an increase.

Medical. 228. A rise in the income under this head of Rs. 13,859 is attributable mainly to the recovery from the Gaya Municipality of Rs. 8,800 out of a contribution of Rs. 10,000 given by the District Board for plague preventive measures.

Civil Works. 229. The receipts under this head decreased by Rs. 4,71,889; but the fall occurred only under the sub-head "Contributions," under which are shown grants made by Government and private individuals for the construction of particular works. No special reason is assigned for the fluctuations.

Contributions. 230. An increase of Rs. 4,67,172 as compared with the preceding year is due to the fact that the large grants for the improvement of education given in the year 1902-1903 could not be drawn during the year or were only drawn for a part of the year.

Deposits and Advances. 231. The receipts under this head fell from Rs. 14,31,742 in 1902-1903 to Rs. 4,44,640. The decrease indicates no real decline, but is due to the fact that Government grants for expenditure on Imperial and Provincial Public Works which are carried out by the District Boards, as the agents of Government, no longer appear under this head, but are excluded entirely from the District Fund accounts. A separate account of such grants is now submitted to the Examiner of Public Works Accounts.

EXPENDITURE.

232. An increase of Rs. 4,264 is due partly to the appointment of two travelling inspectors of pounds and ferries in Midnapore and a pound inspector in Howrah, and partly to a larger outlay on the construction of pounds. Police.

233. The expenditure on "Education" has increased from Rs. 17,47,945 in 1902-1903 to Rs. 18,19,584 in 1903-1904. The largest increase is under "Inspection" amounting to Rs. 55,694, and is caused by the fact that additional Sub-Inspectors of Schools employed for only a part of the year 1902-1903 were entertained for the whole of the year 1903-1904. Educational expenditure increased in 23 districts and decreased in 19. The largest increase amounting to Rs. 45,507, which occurred in Midnapore, is attributed mainly to the fact that the rewards for 1902-1903 could not be paid before the end of the year. The variations elsewhere are not important. Education.

The number of Sub-Inspectors employed by District Boards increased by 9, and the number of inspecting pandits decreased by one. The number of aided high schools fell from 16 to 13, the decrease occurring in the districts of Tippera and Saran. The number of aided upper primary schools rose from 3,909 to 4,101, and the number of pupils from 166,191 to 181,347; while in the case of lower primary schools there was a rise of 2,263 in the number of schools and of 77,611 in the number of pupils. The number of girls attending upper primary schools increased by 1,576, and of those attending lower primary schools by 25,173. The year appears to have been marked by distinct progress in primary education throughout the Province, and the new system of granting a quarterly subsistence allowance to *pathsala gurus* with an additional allowance at the end of the year, if certain tests are satisfied, is reported to have produced good results. The Commissioner of Burdwan remarks that the liberal grant made by Government for the advance of primary education has evidently infused a spirit of improvement in those schools. The Commissioner of Bhagalpur draws attention to the noticeable advance in female education in Purnea where the number of girls' schools rose from 10 to 50, although there was not a school in the district three years before. Fortunately this is not an isolated instance, for improvement in female education is reported from many districts.

234. At present seven industrial schools with 303 pupils are maintained by District Boards. Special Schools.

Several District Boards provide scholarships or contribute for the training of students in the Sibpur Engineering College or the Bihar School of Engineering. Other District Boards have granted scholarships to students in the sericultural school at Boalia. In Midnapore a seri-agricultural school has been established at Sabang by the leading men of the locality, in order to revive the moribund silk industry, and a monthly grant-in-aid of Rs. 30 has been made by the District Board. The Nadia District Board propose to undertake a pottery school, or to inaugurate an industry with the help of the student who was sent at their expense to the Bombay School of Art. The District Board of Bhagalpur has two stipendiaries on Rs. 10 each a month learning brazier's work at the Jaipur School of Arts. In the Chota Nagpur Division there are seven aided industrial schools with 173 pupils, in which carpentry and blacksmith's work are taught.

235. In 1901 the attention of the District Boards was drawn to the fly-shuttle loom and the advantages to the weaving industry to be derived from its use. The Boards were asked to take measures to make known the improvement in the districts and instruct the local weavers in its use. Efforts have actually been made in this direction by 25 District Boards. In most cases two weavers and a carpenter were sent to be trained at Serampore and, after receiving a course of instruction, returned to their district, where they were employed to train the local weavers. In Chittagong the experiment has been successful and the improved loom is appreciated by the people and is coming into use. In Manbhum also some ground has been gained. The progress hitherto made has not been great, for the fly-shuttle is still a novelty in most places (in a few districts looms of this pattern were in use before), and the natural conservatism of the industry is loth to accept reforms which are contrary to tradition. In many cases also poverty prevents the adoption of the improved loom, for the weavers are poor and are unwilling or unable to incur the initial expense of purchase. This obstacle, however, seems likely to be Industrial development.

removed.* From Darbhanga it is reported that the difficulty as to the high price of the improved fly-shuttle looms was overcome by adapting the fly-shuttle to the ordinary country looms. The outturn obtained from these modified looms is said to have been almost equal to that of the framed fly-shuttle looms, *i.e.*, nearly three times that of the ordinary looms in vogue in the district, while their cost scarcely exceeded that of the country looms. If this is so, a real advance has been made and much more rapid progress may be expected. The Commissioner of the Division has been asked to submit a full report to Government on this improvement, so that the results may be communicated to other District Boards.

Medical.

236. The actual expenditure on strictly medical objects, *i.e.*, on "General Medical Establishment" and "Hospitals and Dispensaries" amounted to Rs. 3,16,075. The number of dispensaries maintained is 189 and the cost of maintenance Rs. 1,77,070, and in addition 213 dispensaries received contributions amounting to Rs. 1,44,210.

The expenditure on the same objects has risen by Rs. 4,857 since 1902-1903. A decrease of Rs. 12,366 in Backergunge is accounted for by the non-presentation of claims by the Accountant-General, Bengal, for the value of medicines supplied from the Government Medical Store Depôt. The expenditure in the 24-Parganas nearly doubled owing to the establishment of two new dispensaries and the appointment of a Lady Doctor at Basirhat. The heavy increase in Noakhali is attributed to the adjustment of a large amount on account of European medicines.

Sanitation.

237. The expenditure under this head shows an increase of Rs. 16,143 compared with 1902-1903, which is mainly due to the inclusion of payments amounting to Rs. 12,600 made by the District Boards of Rajshahi and Pabna for the preparation of a drainage scheme. Twenty-two District Boards show no expenditure under this head, but the reports do not show whether this is due to a difference in the objects on which money is spent, or to a want of uniformity in classifying expenditure.

The Sadar and Dinapore Local Boards in the district of Patna continued the work of cleansing insanitary villages. In the former 95 villages and in the latter 10 were cleansed at a cost of Rs. 676 and Rs. 196, respectively. It is reported that further progress has been made in the direction of village sanitation in these subdivisions by the employment, in the larger villages, of sweepers who are placed under a respectable resident. Something has been done in other districts to give a trial to the Patna system by selected Local Boards, but sufficient experience has not yet been obtained to render it possible to decide how far the experiment has been successful. Meanwhile, Commissioners of Divisions have been asked to consider whether legislation on the lines of the Central Provinces Village Sanitation Act might not be useful in Bengal, specially in large villages in the vicinity of railway stations.

Veterinary Charges.

238. Veterinary dispensaries are now maintained by 14 District Boards. Three District Boards grant subsidies to municipal veterinary dispensaries, and itinerant Veterinary Assistants are employed by 12 District Boards. The progress of the Department has been rapid, and there is reasonable ground for expecting that the work will continue to develop in the future, although the sums which the Boards have at their disposal for such purposes are necessarily limited. During the year outbreaks of rinderpest and cattle-disease occurred in Hooghly, Midnapore, Khulna, Mymensingh, Backergunge and Cuttack, and the Veterinary Assistants were able to do something towards checking the spread of the disease. Scholarships in the Bengal Veterinary College, Belgachia, were given by the District Boards of the 24-Parganas, Gaya, Hooghly and Bhagalpur.

The District Board of Birbhum maintain a dairy at Suri, and have opened a branch at Rampur Hât. It is reported that a sum of Rs. 2,716 was spent on the dairy, and that the receipts from the sale of milk and butter amounted to Rs. 1,422. The objects of the institution are to improve the breed of cattle by selling calves, and to supply pure milk to the public. The experiment is an interesting one, and the example may not improbably be followed in other districts.

Civil Works.

239. An increase of Rs. 2,75,406 since 1902-1903 is shared by six Divisions (Burdwan, Presidency, Rajshahi, Patna, Bhagalpur and Orissa) and is

largest in the Patna Division, where it amounted to Rs. 1,66,680. The expenditure under the sub-head "Communications—Original Works" has risen in every Division, except Rajshahi and Chota Nagpur, and in the Patna Division the rise amounted to Rs. 1,80,908. The increase appears to be due chiefly to increased expenditure on railway feeder roads.

Water-supply and Water-works.

240. Only nine Boards, Burdwan (Rs. 5,402), Birbhum (Rs. 6,071), Jessore (Rs. 5,613), Dacca (Rs. 7,090), Mymensingh (Rs. 18,020), Faridpur (Rs. 6,410), Backergunge (Rs. 5,474), Shahabad (Rs. 7,872) and Bhagalpur (Rs. 9,260) spent as much as Rs. 5,000 on water-supply, but in the case of the two last-named Boards the sum spent includes contributions of Rs. 4,000 and Rs. 5,000, respectively, to the local municipality for the maintenance of the water-works. Nothing at all was spent in Muzaffarpur, and the expenditure was below Rs. 1,000 in the districts of Murshidabad, Dinajpur, Jalpaiguri, Tippera, Chittagong, Ranchi, and Palamau. The low expenditure in Murshidabad is explained by the existence of the Lalgola Trust Fund, under which the interest of a sum of Rs. 1,00,000 is expended annually on the construction of new wells.

Drainage Works.

241. In the district of the 24-Parganas Rs. 7,285 was expended on the improvement of the Khardah khal, but part of this sum will be recovered from the Municipalities of Titaghar, South Barrackpore and Panihati, who are also interested in the work. Rupees 364 was spent by the same District Board on the survey of the Usti basin which is connected with the large project under the Sanitary Drainage Act. The District Boards of Rajshahi and Pabna spent Rs. 7,000 and Rs. 5,600, respectively, on the preparation of the scheme for the drainage of the Chalan bil under the same Act.

Roads.

242. The length of the metalled roads maintained by District Boards has decreased by 94 miles since 1902-1903. This fall in the mileage has been continuous during the last four years and is apparently due to reclassification. In certain districts if a part of a road was metalled the whole length of the road was formerly shown as metalled, whereas at present only the length of the portion actually metalled is included. During the year the mileage of unmetalled and village roads has risen by 864 and 1,858 miles, respectively. In the case of the former the expenditure on original works has risen from Rs. 6,57,318 in 1900-1901 to Rs. 13,03,965, and the expenditure on repairs from Rs. 8,83,466 to Rs. 9,20,533, while the cost of repairs per mile has fallen from Rs. 39 to Rs. 35. In the case of village roads the total expenditure has risen by Rs. 18,267, while the cost of repairs has fallen from Rs. 17 to Rs. 14 per mile. The cost per mile of repairs to metalled roads is highest in the Chittagong Division (Rs. 591) and lowest in the Chota Nagpur Division (Rs. 111). In the case of unmetalled roads (including both district and village roads), the rate varies from Rs. 55 in the Chittagong Division to Rs. 20 in the Patna Division. The expenditure on both metalled and unmetalled roads was highest in the Patna Division (Rs. 3,45,646 and Rs. 5,40,204) and lowest on metalled roads in the Chota Nagpur Division (Rs 6,557) and on unmetalled roads in the Orissa Division (Rs. 50,993). In the case of village roads the outlay was greatest in the Dacca Division (Rs. 83,556) and lowest in the Chota Nagpur Division (Rs. 8,776). The Government grant of 5 lakhs for the improvement of communications was spent chiefly on metalling or bridging existing roads or on the construction of feeder roads to the railways.

Railway Feeder Roads.

243. The last few years have been a period of railway extension all over the Province, and the resources of the District Boards have been taxed to the utmost to provide the necessary feeder roads without which the railways lose half their utility. The obligation resting on Government to contribute towards this work has been fully recognised. A considerable proportion of the 5 lakhs grant for the improvement of communications has been devoted to such roads, and in addition during the last five years grants amounting to Rs. 5,73,000 have been given to the District Boards for the construction of feeder roads. It is probable that in most districts the most important roads have now been taken up, and that less assistance will be required in future. The construction of the Ondal-Sainthia Chord of the East Indian Railway and of the Katihar-Ranaghat line on the Eastern Bengal State Railway will, no doubt, necessitate considerable expenditure for this purpose in the districts of Birbhum, Malda and Murshidabad, and in such cases it may be necessary to give assistance of an exceptional kind. But in the rest of the Province Government will in future

ordinarily contribute not more than one-third of the initial cost of construction on condition that the District Board pays the remaining two-thirds and undertakes the cost of maintenance.

Miscellaneous Public Improvements.

244. Roadside arboricultural working-plans have been prepared by all District Boards, except Champaran, and expenditure was incurred on tree-planting and the upkeep of nurseries by every district except Chittagong. The amount spent varied from Rs. 83 in Mymensingh and Rs. 155 in Champaran to Rs. 3,801 in Bhagalpur and Rs. 5,358 in Backergunge. If the districts of the Rajshahi Division (for which no details are given) are excluded, the average expenditure was Rs. 1,195.

Railways and Tramways.

245. Four light railways have been opened under the guarantee of District Boards, viz., the Ranaghat-Krishnagar line in Nadia, the Howrah-Amta and Howrah-Sheakhala lines in Howrah and the Bihar-Bakhtiarpur line in Patna. A line from Barasat to Basirhat in the 24-Parganas was under construction. The conditions under which the lines were constructed are not quite uniform, but they are similar. In each case the Board grants the use of the district roads to the Company free of charge, and, subject to a fixed limit, guarantees to make the net earnings of the Company in some cases up to a fixed sum per mile, and in others to such a sum as will suffice to pay a dividend of 4 per cent. on the share capital. Surplus profits in excess of 4 per cent. are divided between the Board and the Company, and after a certain number of years the Board has the option of taking over the lines. The Howrah-Amta line has been a great financial success, the District Board having received Rs. 1,60,873 in profits during the last six years. On the other hand the Ranaghat-Krishnagar line has cost the District Board of Nadia Rs. 44,923 in subsidies since it was opened, while the Howrah-Sheakhala line has barely paid its way. It is still too early to pronounce on the prospects of the Bihar-Bakhtiarpur line, but the results of the first six months' working are most encouraging. Allusion is made in the Divisional Reports to no less than nine similar projects in various districts, and the list, though by no means exhaustive, shows how much attention is being given to the subject and the likelihood of further developments in the near future. There is no doubt that much can profitably be done in this field, but all schemes require careful examination before sanction is accorded. Government recently found it necessary to warn District Boards that it was necessary to take the advice of Government in the Railway Department before granting concessions for railway schemes, and the neglect of this precaution has in one case caused the loss both of time and money.

Contributions.

246. The expenditure under this head represents mainly refunds of the unexpended balance of Government grants for special works, payments on account of cost of establishments in the offices of account and control, and contributions towards the cost of the police force employed at plague camps. The fluctuations do not call for notice.

Debt.

247. The large decrease of Rs. 8,05,241 under the sub-head "Deposits and Advances" is due to the reason explained in paragraph 231.

Closing balance.

248 The actual closing balance (exclusive of deposits) of the District Boards was Rs. 21,88,434 against Rs. 20,11,658 in 1902-1903, showing an increase of Rs. 1,76,776. In all districts except five the balance was in excess of the working balance fixed by the Commissioner. The excess is partly accounted for by the fact that 35 District Boards had unspent balances, amounting in the aggregate to Rs. 4,27,543, from the Government grants for improvement of communications. This is especially the case in the Patna Division where, out of a closing balance of Rs. 6,47,201, Rs. 1,13,399 represents unspent grants. Other District Boards, *e.g.*, Midnapore and Rangpur, had large sums unspent from Government grants for feeder roads. The largest closing balances were in Darbhanga (Rs. 1,75,345), Rangpur (Rs. 1,52,599), Nadia (Rs. 1,42,354), Midnapore (Rs. 1,17,482), and Gaya (Rs. 1,10,725). The closing balances were unduly low in Bankura (Rs. 3,610) and Bhagalpur (Rs. 5,776), the normal working balances being Rs. 9,000 and Rs. 16,000, respectively.

Amendment of the Bengal Local Self-Government Act.

249. The Bill to amend the Bengal Local Self-Government Act was introduced into Council in March 1904. The objects of the proposed amendments in the law are to legalise expenditure on veterinary objects, to impose tolls on newly-constructed bridges until the initial cost and the capitalised value

of the cost of maintenance and renewal have been recovered, to give power to levy a rate to enable District Boards to pay sums guaranteed by them by way of interest on capital expended on railways and tramways, when it becomes necessary to pay such sums and they are unable to do so otherwise without crippling their administration, to insert in the Act an express recognition of the position of the Education Committee which has been constituted by most District Boards, and to remove flaws and omissions in the Act which experience of its working has brought to light. Steps have been taken to obtain the opinion of Associations and other public bodies with regard to the Bill.

Growth of Local Self-Government.

250. A comparison of the figures of 1888-1889 with those of 1903-1904, shows that during the last fifteen years the growth of Local Self-Government, although quiet and unostentatious, has nevertheless been healthy and vigorous. The District Boards have accomplished much, and have taken new and important functions upon them. When they were first constituted only one line of railway, namely, the East Indian at Buxar, crossed the frontiers of this Province. Now there is a triple communication with the United Provinces, and there are new railway lines to the Central Provinces, to Madras and to Assam. These have multiplied the railway stations throughout the Province, and have necessitated the remodelling of the road system; for the old main roads are largely superseded by the railways, and new feeder roads striking across to them must radiate from the different railway stations. This reorganisation with the help of liberal assistance from Government has to a large extent been carried out. Again, the medical expenditure when the District Boards were first established was only Rs. 2,244: it is now over four lakhs. Light railways were then unknown: there are now four with an aggregate length of 87¾ miles, and a number of others are under consideration. Four District Boards have also subsidised steamer services. Another new departure is the establishment of the Veterinary Department, in connection with which expenditure is now incurred by 25 District Boards. The initiation of large drainage schemes is also a new function of the Boards. There are four such schemes at various stages of advancement: the largest is that for the drainage of the Magrahât and Kaorapooker swamps in the 24-Parganas which will affect 290 square miles of country, and is estimated to cost Rs. 17,89,000. The activity of the Boards has been hampered by want of funds because the revenues assigned to them in addition to their receipts from road cess proved less elastic than was expected. The Local Government has, however, come to their assistance with liberal grants. Among these may be mentioned the large sums which have been given for the construction of feeder roads, the recent addition to the annual assignment for education of more than 4½ lakhs, and the special annual contribution of 5 lakhs which was made for three years towards the cost of roads. The contribution last referred to could not be given during the current year; but Government hopes to be able to renew it from next year, and also by the following year to be able to replace the fixed grants by equivalent assignments of expanding revenue which will place the Boards in a better position to meet the growing demands upon them. The draft Bill, which is now before the Bengal Legislative Council, also proposes to increase the powers and liabilities of the Boards in regard to light railways. The benefit of these railways is chiefly local; and if the Boards wish to have power and responsibility in respect of them, they must also take the risk. All the District Boards have not been equally progressive; but they are generally to be congratulated on the successful result of their administration of the affairs of the districts.

Volunteering.

251. The volunteer corps in existence in Bengal during 1903 were the same as in the previous year. Their enrolled strength was 6,011 on the Active List and 59 Reserves. During the year sanction was accorded to the division of the Bengal-Nagpur Railway Volunteer Corps into two battalions, with Head-quarters at Kharagpur and Nagpur respectively, also to the addition of three companies to the corps.

Marine.

[The information contained in the Chapter below has been obtained partly from the correspondence with the officers and public bodies with whom the Marine Department is concerned, and partly from certain reports which are annually submitted to that Department. The reports consulted are as follows:—

Annual Report of the Port Officer, Calcutta, for the year 1903-1904.
Report on the working of the Shipping Office, Calcutta, and at the Ports of Orissa and Chittagong for the year 1903-1904.
Annual Report of the Health Officer of the Port of Calcutta for 1903.
Administration Report of the Port Commissioners, Calcutta, for the year 1903-1904.
Administration Report of the Howrah Bridge for the year 1903-1904.
Administration Report of the Port Commissioners, Chittagong, for the year 1903-1904.
Administration Report of the Orissa Ports for the year 1903-1904.
Report on the working of the Native Passenger Ship's Act, 1887, in Bengal for the year 1903-1904.]

THE PORT OF CALCUTTA.

Pilot Service, and receipts from Pilotage.

252. At the commencement of the year, the number of Pilots on the list was 49, or 3 short of the sanctioned number. During the year a Committee was appointed by Government to consider certain questions connected with the emoluments and discipline of the Pilot Service; and one of its recommendations was that the number of Pilots should be increased from 52 to 58. This recommendation has recently been sanctioned. The number of vessels that arrived at the port during the year was 1,367, and of those that sailed from it 1,372. These figures represent a gross tonnage of 4,907,016 inwards and 4,912,310 outwards. The average tonnage of steam and sailing vessels inwards and outwards was 3,585. Of the total number of vessels which visited the port, only 27 were sailing vessels. The pilotage receipts during the year amounted to Rs. 12,23,300.

Detentions.

253. Although there has been an increase in the number of steamers drawing over 21 feet, which were piloted inwards and outwards during the year as compared with that of the preceding year, only one vessel was actually neaped, for want of sufficient depth of water over the bars, as against ten such detentions last year. Some steamers, however, left short of cargo in order to avoid being neaped. This shows a satisfactory improvement in the river. The number of vessels detained at the Sandheads for want of Pilots was 5, the average detention being 21 hours and 4 minutes.

Casualties.

254. There were 7 collisions during the year and 16 groundings. In three cases of collision the Pilots concerned were to blame for errors of judgment; and in respect to the groundings, the Pilots were held to blame in five instances. Twenty-eight preliminary enquiries into casualties to vessels were held by the Port Officer, of which one was referred to a Departmental Court of Enquiry and five to Special Courts of Enquiry. In eight cases the Pilots were held to blame, and were suitably dealt with. Two other Departmental Courts and a Marine Court, under Act XII of 1859, were also held, the latter being for the trial of a Pilot for unskilfulness and negligence in grounding a vessel.

Examinations.

255. Ninety-four candidates appeared at the examination for Colonial and Home Trade Certificates of Competency, of whom 63 passed; 291 candidates also appeared at the different examinations for Certificates of Competency as Masters, Serangs, Engineers and Engine-drivers under Act VI of 1884. Of these, 117 passed.

CALCUTTA SHIPPING OFFICE.

256. The receipts of the Shipping Office, Calcutta, amounted during the year under review to Rs. 78,751, and the expenditure aggregated Rs. 31,574.

The number of seamen shipped and discharged were :—

Shipped	41,675
Discharged	36,147

Seamen shipped and discharged.

257. There was a decrease of 206 in the number of seamen shipped under European Articles, and this decrease has been going on for some years past, with the exception of last year, when there was an increase of 134. This decrease, coupled with the fact that the number shipped under Indian Articles has increased, tends to show that lascars are coming more and more into favour with Masters of vessels who, it is said, find them less expensive and more amenable

to discipline. Similarly, under the numbers discharged, there was a decrease of 140 under European Articles and an increase of 3,703 under Indian Articles. Besides the above 42 seamen were shipped and 17 discharged by foreign Consuls. Sixty-five seamen were sent home as distressed seamen.

HEALTH OF THE PORT.

258. The number of inward and outward-bound vessels inspected during the year was 1,749. The number of European and Asiatic seamen inspected on inward-bound vessels, was, respectively, 7,039 and 14,393; in outward-bound vessels there were inspected 21,445 Europeans and 80,640 Asiatics. **Inspection of vessels.**

259. The daily average population of the Port was 1,145. The death-rate amongst European seamen was 8·73 per mille, and amongst Asiatic seamen 5·93 per mille. There were 69 deaths of Asiatics from cholera. **Health of the port.**

260. Sixty-four thousand six hundred and seventy-five lascars arrived in the Port, of whom 35,468 were in coasting steamers, 28,857 in foreign-going steamers, 79 in sailing ships, and 270 in Turkish and Arab vessels. Eighty thousand six hundred and forty lascars left the Port. **Lascar crews.**

CALCUTTA PORT TRUST.

261. The income for 1903-1904 amounted to Rs. 79,65,376, against Rs. 77,34,261 for 1902-1903. The expenditure amounted to Rs. 76,75,562. The balance of receipts over expenditure in the year was Rs. 2,89,814. Adding this amount to the accumulated balances of previous years, the total surplus revenue on the 31st March 1904 was Rs. 22,31,136. Of this amount, a sum of Rs. 16,74,971 has already been set aside for the formation of a Revenue Reserve Fund, and a further contribution of Rs. 1,42,856 will now be made, raising the total at credit of the Fund to Rs. 18,17,827. **Revenue receipts and expenditure.**

262. A sum of Rs. 29,71,393 was expended during the year on various new works; the expenditure was partly met from the proceeds (Rs. 34,10,500) of a 4 per cent. debenture loan of 34 lakhs, which was raised on the 15th June 1903, and partly from temporary advances from Revenue Funds. The Capital Debt of the Trust on the 31st March 1904 was Rs. 5,00,67,482. **Capital expenditure.**

Against this debt, the Commissioners hold properties, including works in progress, stocks of stores, cash, and securities in hand, of the value of Rs. 6,56,11,742; this does not include the Strand Bank lands, the capitalized value of which would amount to a considerable sum. The position of the Commissioners with respect to their debt may therefore be considered satisfactory. At the same time, the large sum of Rs. 42,33,243 has been accumulated by annual contributions from Revenue towards a Sinking Fund for repayment of the debenture loans, and may therefore be treated as an additional asset.

263. In addition to the Revenue Reserve and Sinking Funds, the Commissioners have a Depreciation Fund for vessels and plant, and a Fire Insurance Fund. The additions made to these funds during the year amounted to Rs. 2,32,803 and Rs. 13,411, respectively; but a sum of Rs. 1,68,430 had to be with drawn from the Depreciation Fund to meet expenditure chargeable to that fund. At the close of the year the balance at credit of these funds stood at Rs. 13,99,297. **Depreciation and Insurance Funds.**

264. The receipts from the jetties amounted to Rs. 11,05,729, showing a decrease of Rs. 90,718 compared with the receipts of 1902-1903. The decrease is due mainly to a reduction in the wharfage and night-work charges. **Jetties.**

The expenditure amounted to Rs. 5,52,902, being an increase of Rs. 7,613.

265. The total receipts from the tea warehouse amounted to Rs. 1,11,390. The expenditure amounted to Rs. 67,929. **Tea warehouse.**

266. The income from the petroleum wharf amounted to Rs. 2,87,261, and the total expenditure amounted to Rs. 75,552. **Petroleum wharf.**

267. Two hundred and sixty-six vessels, with an aggregate tonnage of 856,006 tons were berthed at the jetties during the year. The average tonnage of vessels was 3,205 tons and the average number of days each vessel occupied the jetties was 6·8 days. **Vessels berthed at the jetties.**

Port and Port Approaches.

268. The receipts of the Port and Port Approaches Department, which are derived principally from charges on vessels, amounted to Rs. 11,02,017, exclusive of an appropriation of Rs. 41,879 from the Depreciation Fund, as against Rs. 10,99,704 in 1902-1903 and the expenditure amounted to Rs. 11,55,968, as compared with Rs. 10,64,008 in the previous year. The increase of Rs. 91,960 represents the cost of special renewals and repairs to moorings and a light vessel, and includes the contribution of Rs. 41,879 from the Depreciation Fund as stated above.

Survey of the river.

269. The following statement illustrates the progress made in respect of the operations of the River Survey Department:—

	1885.	1900-1901.	1901-1902.	1902-1903.	1903-1904
Miles sounded	1,295	5,864	7,231	7,164	7,699
Small river charts and notices published	20	606	718	823	1,093
Number of buoys ...	7	30	36	44	44
River marks	57	115	115	138	138.

Of the small river charts published, 100,180 copies were distributed to pilots, harbour masters and the shipping.

Railway.

270. The receipts of the Port Trust Railway amounted to Rs. 8,21,296, as compared with Rs. 7,96,541 in 1902-1903, and the expenditure to Rs. 6,12,160 as against Rs. 5,64,446 in the preceding year.

Docks.

271. The total receipts of the Wet Docks, which include the rents from lands and buildings, also receipts from the Port Trust Railway within the dock premises, amounted to Rs. 25,44,379, against Rs. 21,77,455 in 1902-1903. The increase in the receipts from the Wet Dock charges proper was more than 14 per cent., and was almost wholly due to increased exports of coal, and wheat and seeds. The export of coal amounted to 1,660,557 tons, which was in excess of the shipments of the previous year by 270,280 tons.

During the year 671 vessels were berthed at the docks, as compared with 595 vessels in the previous year. There was a substantial increase in the total tonnage handled as compared with 1902-1903; and, although there was a comparatively large falling off in the amount of import traffic, this was compensated for by a much larger increase in exports.

The expenditure of the docks, including that of the dock section of the railway, was Rs. 23,96,282, against Rs. 21,98,816 in 1902-1903.

The Dry Dock continues, as in past years, to give a good return on the capital cost. The income derived from it last year was Rs. 2,16,138, against Rs. 2,40,543 in 1902-1903. This decrease was due to a falling off in the demand for accommodation. The expenditure likewise fell from Rs. 64,890 to Rs. 58,886.

Taking the Wet and Dry Docks together with the dock section of the railway, as they are necessarily comprised in one scheme, the financial results of the year, after reduction of working expenses, show a balance of Rs. 3,05,349 compared with Rs. 1,54,292 in 1902-1903.

The total capital expenditure at the docks amounts to Rs. 365¾ lakhs; and, although the net income is not nearly sufficient to pay for interest and Sinking Fund charges, a marked improvement is observed in the working results. With a fuller use of the facilities provided, it is hoped that the net revenue will in the future approximate more closely to the amount required to meet the interest and Sinking Fund charges on the large capital outlay.

Luff Point scheme.

272. In November 1903, a Commission was appointed under the orders of the Government of India to report on a proposal made by the Bengal-Nagpur Railway Company for the establishment of a depôt for the export of coal at Luff Point. In the report which has been published, the conclusions arrived at by the Commission are—that additional facilities are not required, as the Port Commissioners can provide ample accommodation for the trade of the port, including the exports of coal, at the docks at Kidderpore; and that, if at any time an auxiliary port on the Hooghly becomes necessary, it should be under the control of the Port Commissioners, as the formation of a depôt under any other agency would be contrary to the interests of the general trade of the Port.

273. A sum of Rs. 29,71,393 was expended on new works during the year. The second Dry Dock is nearing completion, and will, it is anticipated, be ready for use by the close of the current financial year. The warehouse accommodation at the docks is being considerably increased. The existing transit sheds have already been extended by 75,000 square feet, and three grain sheds at Kantapukur, extending over an area of 90,000 square feet, have been constructed. New works.

274. A sum of Rs. 10,63,579 was realized from the levy of river dues, against Rs. 9,66,248 during 1902-1903. River dues.

HOWRAH BRIDGE.

275. The actual receipts from and expenditure on account of this bridge during the year amounted to Rs. 1,81,155 and Rs. 1,93,607, respectively, showing a loss of Rs. 12,452. The bridge was opened for the passage of vessels on 155 occasions of which 103 were on the ordinary fixed days of the week, and 52 were on Sundays on special application. No sea-going vessels collided with the bridge.

THE PORT OF CHITTAGONG.

276. The Chittagong Port Fund opened with a balance of Rs. 4,656. The receipts of the year amounted to Rs. 1,33,552 and the expenditure to Rs. 80,854, leaving a closing balance of Rs. 57,354. Finance.

The receipts show a large and satisfactory increase of Rs. 49,222, and this is mainly due to the levy of "river dues." In consequence of the financial embarrassments of the Port Trust, and with a view to increase the revenue of the Port Trust it was decided that a toll should be levied on all goods landed from and shipped into vessels under the name of a River due. The Act was accordingly amended, and on the 20th July 1903 the due was levied at the rate of 2 annas per ton. The total amount realised from this due has been Rs. 29,600. Of the remaining items of revenue, port dues and mooring fees have contributed an increase of Rs. 11,608 and Rs. 5,580, respectively, owing to a number of vessels of larger tonnage having entered the port. This is a satisfactory feature of the revenue returns and it is hoped that a period of prosperity has set in for the port.

The expenditure of the year shows a reduction of Rs. 16,027, due mainly to the transfer of the working of the new iron jetty to the Assam-Bengal Railway. Under "repairs" there was a reduction of Rs. 8,654, as it was decided not to undertake any repairs to the steam-tug *Gekko*.

277. A total of 356 vessels entered the port, against 383 during the previous year, or a reduction of 27; but the aggregate tonnage of these vessels increased from 241,367 tons to 283,959 tons. Of this total 20 vessels, aggregating 44,452 tons, entered from foreign ports, and 336 vessels, with a tonnage of 239,507 tons, from Home ports. The latter shows a decrease of 36, but the tonnage advanced by 21,936 tons and this is attributed by the Commissioners to fewer native craft being employed in the jute trade with Narayangunge, and to steamers of larger tonnage being employed in the coasting trade. Shipping.

278. The principal articles of export are grain, jute and tea; and of import, mineral oil and salt. The export trade of the year shows an increase of 66 per cent. on the staples above mentioned. Of the imports there was a slight falling off in the salt trade, but the imports of mineral oil increased by nearly 140 per cent. The decrease in salt was, however, not real, as a vessel with 3,900 tons of salt arrived on the last day of the year and these figures have not been included in the current year's returns. Trade.

279. The appliances of the port and the light-houses have been kept in good order throughout the year. The Pilot Service worked satisfactorily, and there were no accidents during the year. Miscellaneous.

The number of seamen shipped and discharged were 75 and 876, against 32 and 366 during 1902-1903.

280. On the 15th February last Chittagong was visited by His Excellency the Viceroy, and in his reply to the address of welcome presented to him, His Excellency promised the port the following measures of assistance:— Measures of assistance accorded by Government.

(1) To write off the outstanding balance of Rs. 87,282 of the loan of two lakhs of rupees taken by the Commissioners for the purchase of the steam-tug *Gekk*-

(2) To make an Imperial grant to defray the cost: (a) of providing a dredger capable of clearing the bars of the river so as to facilitate the passage of larger vessels, and (b) of revetting the river banks to such extent as may be necessary.

(3) To advance funds through the provincial loan account for the provision of jetties, warehouses and other works required for the service of the trade of the port.

The first promise has been redeemed by the balance of the loan being written off, and the Commissioners have now no liability to meet on account of interest charges. The annual charge has been Rs. 16,295 and this sum is now available for expenditure on the port.

In regard to the second and third promises, the Commissioners having no staff, Government, at the end of the year, appointed Mr. J. R. Bell, a retired officer of the Public Works Department, to make an examination of the port and prepare a report on the works necessary. This report is now under consideration.

THE PORTS OF ORISSA.

281. The receipts during the year amounted to Rs. 15,582 and the expenditure to Rs. 14,616 with an opening balance of Rs. 12,121. The year closed with a balance of Rs. 13,087 and no contribution from Government was required.

The value of the trade of the Ports was Rs. 82,75,513, against Rs. 84,39,316 in the preceding year. The decrease was due to reductions in the free import and export trades of Balasore, and in some measure to the diversion of the trade to the Railway. It was partially compensated for by a rise in the value of the export trade, due to larger shipments of rice to foreign ports from all the districts as well as to the coasting ports from Cuttack and Puri.

Two hundred and twenty-five vessels of 156,589 tons visited the ports during the year.

CHAPTER IV.—PRODUCTION AND DISTRIBUTION.

Agriculture.

[Report of the Agricultural Branch of the Department of Land Records and Agriculture, Bengal, for 1903-1904.]

Pusa Estate scheme.

282. The most important event of the year was the promulgation by the Government of India in February 1904 of its scheme for the establishment of an Agricultural Research Station, an Experimental farm, and an Agricultural College on the Pusa estate situate within this Province. Although the institution will be an Imperial one under the general supervision and control of the Inspector-General of Agriculture, the Director of Agriculture, Bengal, and his Deputy will be free to visit it from time to time, and to suggest experiments and subjects for research. From the location of this institution in its midst very great advantages cannot but accrue to agriculture in this Province.

Scientific enquiries.

283. Considerable progress was made during the year in the enquiry into the alleged deterioration of jute; and special investigations were made into the practice of fraudulently watering the fibre. Experiments with jute were conducted at the Burdwan farm and at Faridpur and Jalpaiguri; and endeavours were made to demonstrate the growing of varieties under expert supervision. Special attention was paid during the year under review to the subject of cotton cultivation. Experiments were undertaken with the object of ascertaining what varieties are adaptable to local conditions and what is the best method of production; seeds were widely distributed; and efforts were made to extend local cultivation. The results obtained from the seeds distributed by the Department of Land Records and Agriculture were on the whole discouraging. There is, in the opinion of the Inspector-General of Agriculture, great scope for extending the cultivation of superior cotton in Bihar; and it is proposed to arrange for extensive experiments at Pusa in comparing varieties, testing methods of cultivation and improving varieties by selection and cross-breeding.

During the year Government kept up at a cost of Rs. 43,000 the Dalsing Serai Indigo Research Station. The staff, consisting of two chemists and a Biological Botanist, were engaged on a study of the chemistry of the indigo leaf and improvements in the method of manufacture. Government also contributed towards the cost of research conducted at Pipra under the Behar Indigo-Planters' Association. A scheme for an indigo-seed farm at Delhi, including experimental cultivation of the Java and other varieties, has also been sanctioned. The seed-farming experiments will be duplicated in small areas by planters in Behar, in order to determine whether it is necessary to obtain seed from the United Provinces or whether seed can be produced in Behar.

Experimental farms, &c.

284. An experimental farm was started during the year at Cuttack, in accordance with the suggestion of the Government of India that it might be possible to hasten the development of improved agricultural methods in Orissa by the establishment of an experimental farm which would show the cultivators what can be done with water always at command. A scheme of experiments in irrigation which has been approved by Government will now be undertaken at this farm and at the Dumraon and Burdwan experimental farms. The results of the experiments made at the Sibpur farm were of especial value as showing that certain varieties of *aus* paddy are drought-resisting and prolific: the experiments will be continued under different conditions of soil and climate.

Provincial Agricultural Association.

285. A growing interest in agricultural progress is being displayed in various parts of the Province. A society has been formed in Orissa with the object of developing the resources of that Province by private enterprise; the District Board of Rajshahi has offered to give land free for a divisional farm; a gentleman of Mymensingh has already placed a farm under the direction of

the Department, and is bearing all the expenses of its management; and excellent work is being done by private gentlemen in advancing improved methods in their own districts. It is observed, however, that the experiments conducted through the tenants of Government and wards' estates and other private individuals gave, on the whole, unsatisfactory results; and that it was only where they were under the personal supervision of District Officers or other responsible persons that they proved successful. To remedy this state of affairs, the employment of four travelling overseers has been sanctioned by Government, and a closer supervision of experimental work in the Province is now being exercised. Very much more, however, requires to be done. The Agricultural Department has admittedly failed hitherto to make known among the people the results which have been attained by experiment. Accounts of the various operations undertaken are published annually, but they have not reached the cultivating classes; and even in the vicinity of the various agricultural farms improved methods of cultivation have not been adopted. There are many zamindars and merchants keenly interested in agriculture, but their sympathy and co-operation have not been enlisted. In these circumstances, it seemed that an agency is wanted to disseminate agricultural knowledge and to awaken further interest in, and discussion of, the agricultural development of the Province. Experience in the Central Provinces has shown what immense advantage has followed the creation of advisory Agricultural Associations; and it would appear that there is a great field of work open to such Associations in Bengal. It was, therefore, decided, as a first step, to establish a Provincial Agricultural Association at Calcutta to co-operate with the Director in his work in this Province. Its chief work will be in connection with agricultural experiments and the dissemination of the results of such experiments; but it will also advise Government as regards the programme of work of the Agricultural Department, as well as concerning all matters affecting the improvement of agriculture and the best method of reclaiming waste lands. The first meeting of the Provincial Association was held in Calcutta at the end of August 1904, at which the Lieutenant-Governor delivered an address, explaining the objects with which it had been constituted. Commissioners of Divisions were also addressed by Government on the subject and their co-operation invited in the formation of Divisional and District Associations under the Provincial Association.

Sericulture.

286. The Bengal Silk Committee continued to carry on its useful work in popularising the use of healthy seed and extending mulberry plantations. Progress has been made in extending the silk industry in Midnapore and the Tributary States of Orissa. In Midnapore a school has been established by local efforts with the object of reviving the silk industry in the district and of improving the agricultural condition of the people by giving instruction in agriculture and sericulture. In the Keonjhar State a trained sericulturist was employed to supervise the development of sericultural operations; and in Moharbhanj mulberry plantations were established and cocoon-rearing and reeling was introduced.

Ag icultural Education.

287. The results of the examinations of the Sibpur Agricultural Class were satisfactory. The Director observes, however, that the supply of qualified scholars is not equal to the demand for their services, and that the scheme of divisional farms must necessarily proceed slowly for want of expert officers in whose charge they can be placed. The Sibpur Agricultural Classes will be abolished as soon as the Imperial Agricultural College, to be founded in connection with the Pusa Estate Scheme, is ready to receive pupils. It is hoped that the establishment of this Research Station and College will lead to a greater number of students coming forward, and from that College valuable assistance is looked for in respect of the trained managers and fieldmen who will be available for the local farms.

Weather and Crops.

[Season and Crop Report of Bengal for 1903-1904: Report on the Land Revenue Administration of the Lower Provinces for 1903-1904.]

Character of the season.

288. The rainfall of the Province was below the normal in all districts except Howrah, Mymensingh, Champaran, Balasore, Angul and Puri. The fall in April was much below the normal throughout the Province, except in Chota

pur. Favourable weather also prevailed in Chota Nagpur during May, but rainfall was much lighter than usual over the other parts of the Province. In the west of Bihar and Chota Nagpur rainless weather prevailed in the first two weeks of June. In other parts of the Province throughout the month and in the western districts during the latter half of the month, showers were of daily occurrence. North and East Bengal received in June an excess of rainfall of 2·8 and 2·2 inches, respectively, while in the other parts of the Province it was slightly defective. The distribution of rain throughout July was nowhere of the character of an established monsoon while in the west light and scattered showers were obtained. The total average for the whole of Bihar was only 4·2 inches, the normal for the month being 13 inches. In North and East Bengal the defect was very large. In Orissa only moderate to heavy rain prevailed, the average fall being 14 inches which is 2·6 inches in excess. The general drought, in the north of the Province, came to an end on the 4th of August, when monsoon conditions properly commenced in all parts of Bengal, and they continued to the end of the month with very brief interruptions. There was a heavy rainfall on the 12th and 13th in the northern districts and the Lower Himalayan slopes, and generally along the hills, but most marked in North Bengal and West Bihar. In September, while the averages of the divisions show a fairly distributed rainfall, there were more variations in the northern districts than in the south. On the whole, rainfall was in defect over the Province in September, except in Dinajpur, Shahabad, and Gaya. In Lower Bengal, Orissa and west of Chota Nagpur there was general, but somewhat irregular, excess.

In October the rainfall was heavy and general in the early part of the month and again at the close. At the close of the month it was general over the Province, except in some of the western districts of Bihar, where only scattered showers fell. The average fall in Orissa and Bihar was nearly double the normal, and in Chota Nagpur it was more than three times. In Bengal Proper there was generally an excess. In November, the rainfall was *nil* in Bihar and practically *nil* in Chota Nagpur, while East Bengal received on an average double the normal amount. December was practically rainless. In January the fall was greatest in Bihar, about ·3 inches. In North and East Bengal about half that amount fell. The other Divisions were practically rainless. On several days in February heavy rain fell. The fall was heaviest in North and East Bengal and lightest in Orissa and Bihar. In March, rainfall was on the whole scanty, except in Chota Nagpur. On the whole, the season was not favourable to the agricultural operations of the Province, but the defective rainfall of the early part of the season which created some uneasiness in the Province, was a good deal made up by the heavy rainfall towards the end of the season.

Total cropped area.

289. The table below gives the estimated area and outturn in 1903-1904 of the different harvests, viz., *bhadoi*, winter and *rabi* as compared with that of the previous year and of a normal year:—

Name of harvest.		Normal area in acres.	Area cultivated during 1902-1903 in acres.	Area cultivated during 1903-1904 in acres.	Taking 100 to represent the normal outturn, how much represented the outturn for the year 1902-1903?	Taking 100 to represent the normal outturn, how much represented the outturn for the year 1903-1904?
Bhadoi ...	...	16,204,400	15,130,200	14,757,600	88	81
Winter	Winter rice ...	30,554,600	29,778,700	27,561,000	94	90
	Sugarcane ...	690,100	673,500	645,400	92	94
Rabi ...	...	15,385,400	14,270,600	14,886,400	86	90
Total ...		62,834,500	59,853,000	57,850,400	90	86

The total cropped area of the Province in a normal year amounts, according to the latest estimates, to about 62¾ million acres, of which winter rice, which is the staple food-crop of the Province, occupies about 30½ million acres; the various *bhadoi* food-crops occupy about 12¾ million acres and the *rabi* food-crops nearly 10 million acres; sugarcane is grown over ⅔ million acres and

the other *bhadoi* and *rabi* non-food-crops, including jute and oil-seeds, are grown on the rest.

Bhadoi or autumn crops.

290. There was a falling off in the area planted with the *bhadoi* crops on account of the defect in the early part of the season. The same cause, as well as the heavy rainfall at and after harvest reduced the outturn to 81 per cent. of a normal crop, against 88 per cent. in the previous year.

The total area cultivated with all descriptions of *bhadoi* crops, both food and non-food, was 14,757,600 acres as compared with 15,130,200 acres of the preceding year and a normal area of 16,204,400 acres.

Food-crops occupied 11,703,900 as compared with a normal area of 12,704,500 acres, and their outturn was estimated at only 80 per cent. of a normal crop. The various non-food crops, including jute, indigo, *bhadoi* and *til*, were sown in 3,053,700 acres, the normal area being estimated at 3,499,900 acres. The jute crop was estimated at 94 per cent., and indigo, which was the poorest of all, gave a 65 per cent. outturn only, the total yield of all the *bhadoi* non-food crops being estimated at 85 per cent. of the normal.

Winter rice crops.

291. The *ante*-monsoon showers were seriously defective throughout the Province except in Ranchi; the defect continued till August, when, in many districts, paddy was resown. In September the showers were usually light, but heavy rains occurred early and again late in October. The season was not altogether favourable for the crop; the defect in the early part of the season affected not only the area but also the outturn. The area sown was estimated at 27,561,000 acres as compared with 29,778,700 acres of the preceding year, the normal area under this crop being returned at 30,554,600 acres and the provincial outturn was estimated at 90 per cent. of the average against 94 per cent. of the preceding year.

***Rabi* or spring crops.**

292. The heavy October rains favoured the sowing of the *rabi* crops, which in Bihar were again much benefited by the January rains. Light showers were also obtained in January in Chota Nagpur and North Bengal. In February the rainfall was more copious and general. On the whole, therefore, the season was favourable for the growth of crops.

The result was that the outturn for the Province, as a whole, was 90 per cent. as compared with 86 per cent in the preceding year.

The total area cultivated in all the *rabi* crops, both food and non-food, was estimated at 14,886,400 acres against 14,270,600 acres of the preceding year, the total normal area being returned at 15,385,400 acres. The total area cultivated with the various *rabi* food-crops, including wheat, amounted to 9,821,900 acres only in the year under report, against 9,402,000 acres in 1902-1903, and the outturn amounted to 90 per cent. as compared with 88 per cent. in the previous year. The area sown with the different *rabi* non-food crops, including cotton and *rabi* oil-seeds, was estimated at 5,064,500 acres, as compared with a total normal area of 5,333,800 acres, and the outturn was estimated at only 89 per cent. of the normal.

The *boro* or summer rice and wheat yielded 95 and 90 per cent., respectively, of the normal outturn.

The sugarcane was planted on an estimated area of 645,400 acres against 673,500 acres in the preceding year, the normal area under this crop being returned at 690,100 acres. The estimated outturn was 94 per cent. as compared with 92 per cent. of the preceding year.

Divisional summary.

293. The following summary of the harvest is given, division by division:—

In the Burdwan Division the rainfall* during the earlier part of the year was insufficient and unevenly distributed, but the deficiency was largely made good during the end of August and beginning of September. Owing to late transplantation, however, the outturn of winter rice crop and of other crops was much below the normal. The *bhadoi* food-crops of the division gave only 75 per cent. outturn, while the winter rice, which is the principal food-crop of the people, yielded only 76 per cent. of a normal crop. The rabi food-crops gave an outturn of 70 per cent..

The deficient rainfall in the Presidency Division reduced the outturn of crops everywhere except in Jessore, where the fall, though below the normal,

* Figures showing the rainfall of each district in this and the other Divisions during the year will be found in Appendix XXVIII to the Land Revenue Administration Report of the Lower Provinces for 1903-1904.

was seasonable throughout the greater part of the district, the result being an improved yield of almost all crops. The *bhadoi* food-crops in the division gave only a 75 per cent. of the outturn, while winter rice yielded 85 per cent. of a normal crop. The outturn of the *rabi* food-crops amounted to only 70 per cent. of the normal.

Most of the districts in the Rajshahi Division had good crops. Owing to a deficient fall of rain, *bhadoi* and jute suffered considerably in the district of Rajshahi, but gram and mustard were excellent. The *bhadoi* in Jalpaiguri was damaged by violent west winds, and the yield of other crops was below the normal owing to the short rainfall. The *bhadoi* food-crops gave an outturn of 81 per cent., winter rice was a 94 per cent. crop, while *rabi* food-crops gave 95 per cent. of the normal. Jute was a 76 per cent. crop.

In the Dacca Division, except in Mymensingh, the rainfall was below the average, but its distribution was favourable to the winter rice. There was a bumper harvest in Dacca, and the average was reached everywhere except in Backergunge. The *bhadoi* was considerably below normal in Faridpur and Backergunge, and jute everywhere in the division, especially in the last district. The divisional outturn of the *bhadoi* food-crops was 87 per cent. and that of the winter rice was normal. The *rabi* food-crops amounted to 91 per cent.; jute gave an outturn of 85 per cent.

In the Chittagong Division the rainfall, though deficient, was generally well distributed and favourable to the crops, except in the Chittagong district where the *bhadoi* crop, owing to shortness in the early part of the year, suffered considerably. The winter rice, however, benefited greatly by the good rainfall in October. The *bhadoi* and *rabi* food-crops averaged 89 per cent. of the normal, while winter rice and jute yielded a normal crop.

In the Patna Division the rainfall was very badly distributed. Prospects generally were so gloomy in the latter part of July that some scarcity and distress were anticipated in the subdivisions of Barh and Bihar, and in parts of the districts of Gaya and Shahabad. Fair rain in August and an excellent fall early in October, however, did much to improve the prospects of the winter rice, and provided adequate moisture for the *rabi* which, with the help of some winter showers, proved very successful. On the other hand this harvest suffered from the failure of the winter rains in the districts north of the Ganges. The heavy flood of the river Gandak in the month of August caused trouble temporarily over a large area in Muzaffarpur, Saran, and Champaran. The *bhadoi* food-crops gave an average outturn of 75 per cent., while the winter rice produced an outturn of 84 per cent. The *rabi* food-crops (including wheat and barley) gave 87 per cent. Indigo yielded only 57 per cent. while opium gave 88 per cent., and sugarcane an 88 per cent. crop.

In the Bhagalpur Division the deficiency in the fall was particularly marked in the southern portions of Monghyr and Bhagalpur and the adjoining parts of the Sonthal Parganas, where, in the early part of the rainy season, there was a long spell of drought, and the outlook for a time was grave. This was specially so in the Banka subdivision, where a partial panic arose, and the dealers stopped the issue of grain. This led to a temporary outbreak of lawlessness, and a large number of cases of grain-looting took place in the beginning of August. Happily, however, a copious fall of rain in the second week of that month allayed all anxiety. Malda and Purnea were also affected by the absence of rain in the first part of the season, and later on they suffered from floods. The *bhadoi* crops suffered more or less in all the districts of the division, and the winter rice crop was particularly bad in the Jamui and Godda subdivisions. The *bhadoi* food-crops yielded an outturn only of 64 per cent., while the winter rice gave an outturn of 79 per cent.; the *rabi* food-crops (including wheat and barley) gave an outturn of 92 per cent. Indigo was an 89 per cent. crop, while poppy was a 97 per cent. crop.

The rainfall in the Orissa Division was fairly evenly distributed, and was copious in the important months of July to October. The *bhadoi* harvest was 96 per cent. of the normal, while winter rice gave 98 per cent. The *rabi* food-crops came only to 80 per cent.

In the Chota Nagpur Division the *bhadoi* food-crops gave an outturn of 89 per cent., while winter rice amounted to 83 per cent. The *rabi* food-crops came to 94 per cent. of the average.

Of the special crops, jute was estimated at 94 per cent., and indigo, which was the poorest of all, gave a 65 per cent. outturn only. The tobacco crop yielded 83 per cent. and sugarcane 94 per cent. The mango crop in Malda was a fine one, and tea in Jalpaiguri was good. Oil-seeds in the eastern districts gave a normal yield.

Horticulture.

[Annual Report on the Royal Botanic Garden and the Lloyd Botanic Garden for 1903-1904.]

294. At the Royal Botanic Garden the weather throughout the year was generally favourable to vegetation. Great interest is taken by the public in plants yielding useful fibres and during the year considerable progress was made with the enquiry into the various species of Agave that occur in India. Investigations as to the sources of "Indian Hemp" were also continued. Seeds received from various parts of India were grown experimentally with the result of proving that fibres which in the trade vary in value according to locality of origin from £9 to £18 per ton are grown from the same plant "Crotalaria juncea." What is still more interesting is the result that when the plants in question are grown side by side, cultivated under identical conditions and their fibre is extracted in the same way, the difference in value almost disappears. The work of cultivating living tubers or bulbs and of growing seeds for the purpose of identifying the sources of economic articles on behalf of the Reporter on Economic Products went on as usual during the year, as did also the preparation of grafts of fruit-trees and the raising of stock of trees for planting by Government officers on roadsides and elsewhere.

The number of named specimens distributed to other herbaria during the year was 16,110, and the number received 20,976. The number of packets of seeds distributed was 6,152, the number of packets received being 1,677. The number of plants distributed was 38,887, and of those received 11,019. The condition of the Lloyd Botanic Garden at Darjeeling was satisfactory throughout the year.

Forests.

[Progress Report of Forest Administration in the Lower Provinces of Bengal for 1903-1904.]

Changes in forest areas; settlements, &c.

295. The most important changes effected during the year were the additions of 45,449 acres to the Reserved Forests in the Chittagong Division and of 50,772 acres to the protected forests in the Puri Division. The total area of forests of all classes under the management of the Forest Department at the end of the year amounted to 13,007 square miles. During the year settlement proceedings were vigorously pushed on. Survey operations were carried out in Kalimpong (Tista), Darjeeling, and the protected Forests of Singhbhum.

Working plans.

296. The revision of the working plan of the Sundarbans Division was completed and submitted after the close of the year to the Inspector-General of Forests; while that of the Puri Division was finally sanctioned during the year. A revised plan for the Darjeeling Forests was prepared, and considerable progress was made with the revision of the plans of several other Divisions.

Breaches of Forest Law.

297. The number of breaches of the forest law reported was 2,923, as against 3,556 in the previous year. The heaviest decrease occurred in the Sundarbans Division, where changes in the method of working have deprived wood-cutters of the opportunities of cutting undersized *sundri* trees which previous arrangements failed to prevent. There was an increase of 140 in the number of cases taken into Court. This increase was the result of orders issued during the year directing Forest Officers not to resort too freely to the practice of compounding offences against the forest law out of Court.

Forest Fires.

298. During the year 109 square miles out of the 2,169 square miles of specially protected area were burnt as the result of forest fires, the most serious fire being one which crossed from the Native State of Bonai and destroyed 80 square miles of forest in the Singhbhum Division. During the year arrangements were concluded with the Nepal Durbar, having for their object the prevention of fires in forests on the British and Nepal frontier. The Native States under the political administration of the Bengal Government have also

been addressed with a view to minimising the risks from outside fires in those States.

Outturn of forest produce.

299. There was a falling off in the total amount of produce of all kinds removed from the forests; the decrease being most marked in the case of timber and fuel, the outturn of which was 3,707,951 cubic feet less than in the year 1902-1903. This decrease is mainly due to the decline in the sale of timber and firewood extracted from the Sundarbans, owing to the enforcement of the regulations prohibiting the cutting of undersized *sundri* logs, and to the fact that consumers had large stocks in hand at the beginning of the year.

Financial Results.

300. Information under the head will be found in Chapter V "Revenue and Finance" under "Forest Revenue."

Manufactures and Mines.

[Divisional Commissioners' Miscellaneous Reports for 1903-1904; Agricultural Statistics of India Volume I, Tables Nos. 7 (Tea) and 9 (Area and Yield of Crops); Financial and Commercial Statistics of British India, Eleventh Issue, Sections XXI, Cotton Mills; XXII, Jute Mills; XXVI, Coal Mines; XXVII, Mineral Production, ; XXVIII, Large Industries.]

Jute.

301. The total area cultivated with jute in 1903 was estimated at 2,209,300 acres, and the total outturn at 6,328,000 bales, as against 2,108,300 acres and 5,280,000 bales, respectively, in the previous year. The outturn was 87 per cent. of a normal crop, against 80 per cent. in the preceding year.

The total number of spindles in the jute mills worked by steam in Bengal during the year was 372,836, of which 231,560 were in the 24-Parganas, 57,668 in the district of Hooghly, and 83,608 in the district of Howrah. They gave employment to 122,724 persons in all.

Cotton Mill

302. The total number of spindles at work in steam cotton mills was 450,962, giving employment to 10,230 persons. The quantity of woven goods produced in these mills, which are all of them near Calcutta, was 690,816 lbs.

Tea.

303. The total number of tea plantations in the Province during the year under report was 422, as against 438 in the preceding year. The area under cultivation was 135,956 acres, and the quantity of tea manufactured 50,888,084 lbs., as against 135,158 acres and 46,027,823 lbs., respectively, in the previous year. The total number of persons employed in the various gardens was 108,349. More than half the gardens are in the district of Jalpaiguri, and of the total output of the year they contributed 36,891,184 lbs. The industry is practically confined to this district and the district of Darjeeling, where there are 169 gardens, with a total outturn during the year of 12,298,446 lbs.

The low and unprofitable prices realised in recent years as the result of increasing the supply at a much more rapid rate than the growth of the demand have administered the needful check to indiscriminate progress of cultivation. The industry has now acquired a position of some strength, and unless coarser plucking be very freely resorted to, there can be no immediate danger of supply outrunning demand.

Indigo.

304. The outturn of the indigo crop was, according to the final figures furnished by Messrs. Moran & Co. of Calcutta, 47,630 Factory maunds, 7,220 maunds for Lower Bengal and 40,410 maunds for Bihar, made up for the most part of 20,800 maunds for Tirhut and 14,160 maunds for Champaran. This outturn is one and-a-half times greater than that for the preceding two years.

Coal.

305. The total production of the 279 coal mines in Bengal was 6,361,212 tons, and the total number of persons employed was 74,538. Of the total output, the Raniganj, Jherria and Giridih coal-fields contributed 3,066,720, 2,493,729, and 766,871 tons respectively.

Cinchona.

306. The Government Cinchona Plantation and Factory made good progress during the year. The crop amounted to 316,757 lbs. of dry bark, the bulk of which was quinine producing. In addition to this amount 119,561 lbs. of bark were purchased at a total cost of Rs. 50,000. The outturn of sulphate of quinine was 12,314 lbs. against 11,927 lbs. in 1902-1903 and of the Cinchona febrifuge 3,800 lbs. against 4,348 lbs. The decrease in the outturn of the febrifuge is attributed to the fact that a large stock remained in hand from the previous year. The year under report witnessed for the first time the production in the Factory of sulphate of cinchonidine, 290 lbs. of which were manufactured as a bye-product in connection with the manufacture of quinine. The

increase of 1,071 lbs. in the issues of sulphate of quinine is believed to be due to a large demand for pice packets. On the other hand the decrease of 976 lbs. in the issues of febrifuge was chiefly caused by the cessation of demands from South Africa. Receipts amounted to Rs. 2,15,994, and a surplus of Rs. 66,320 was returned on the year's working.

GENERAL ACCOUNT OF MANUFACTURES AND MINES IN THE SEVERAL DIVISIONS.

Burdwan Division.

307. The outturn of coal in the districts of Burdwan, Birbhum and Bankura amounted to 2,841,627 tons.

There are several jute and cotton mills in Hooghly and Howrah: figures with regard to the outturn of these mills in Bengal are given above. Cotton cloth is manufactured on a limited scale in all the districts of the Division, but the industry is gradually declining owing, as stated in previous years, to foreign competition and the demand for the cheaper kind of European piece-goods. The fly-shuttle loom continues to be in use in the Serampore and Arambagh subdivisions. Its use has developed to a great extent in the Raniganj subdivision.

The silk industry was carried on in the districts of Birbhum, Bankura and Midnapore as in the previous year, but it was somewhat dull in the first two districts. Tasar cloth continued to be manufactured in the districts of Burdwan, Birbhum, Bankura and Midnapore. There was a general decrease in the outturn, but the decrease was most marked in Burdwan, being 41,780 yards against 164,380 yards, which is attributable to the introduction of cheaper and finer cloths such as are imported from Bombay, Japan and Assam.

There are iron-works at Barakar in Burdwan and also at Howrah. The outturn at Barakar was 43,737 tons, valued at Rs. 24,57,433 as against 43,663 tons, valued at Rs. 24,40,035 in the previous year. There was a notable rise in the value of the quantity turned out in Howrah from Rs. 28,00,000 to Rs. 40,00,000. The outturn of the pottery works at Raniganj was valued at Rs. 6,44,625, which shows a slight increase on the figures of the previous year.

The manufacture of shellac was carried on in Bankura and Birbhum. The business is gradually declining owing to the competition of cheap foreign lac manufactured by a chemical process. The total outturn in Bankura was 5,387 maunds, against 6,737 maunds in the previous year.

The total quantity of paper produced at Raniganj was 2,884 tons, valued at Rs. 8,65,200, and the value of the outturn at Bally was Rs. 10,68,073. There was a decrease in the latter owing to bad markets.

Wood-carving is carried on in the Vishnupur subdivision of the Bankura district. Ebony wood-work, valued at Rs. 10,000, is reported for the first time to have been manufactured in the Hooghly district. The oil-mills of Raniganj seem to do a large business, while in Howrah large flour-mills have been established.

Presidency Division.

308. The cotton and spinning trade during the year under report was not profitable. Owing to the heavy exports caused by the failure of crops in America, the price of raw cotton advanced from Rs. 17 to Rs. 27 per maund and the spinners had difficulty in finding buyers for their goods at a rate even approximately near the laying down cost. The spinners of coarser counts of yarns suffered greatly in the absence of demand for yarns for hand-looms, and with the high price of cotton the natural consequence was that mills were obliged to have recourse to short time to avoid running into stock.

The jute crop being a $15\frac{1}{2}$ anna crop, the year was fairly remunerative to jute mills. The increase in the outturn as compared with that of the previous year led to more extensive demand from local mills and home consumers, so that the jute sellers were able to obtain the same price for raw material as in the previous year.

The total outturn of the two paper-mills at Titagarh and Kankinara was 20,013,504 lbs., valued at Rs. 26,80,310, as against 19,131,092 lbs., valued at Rs. 29,03,896, in the previous year. The weaving of silk cloth in the district of Murshidabad, which was gradually declining, has shown some signs of improvement.

The manufacture of sugar by country methods is gradually declining owing to competition with imported sugar, in spite of the countervailing duties.

The fly-shuttle has come into use at several places. Seventy-six factories of all kinds were actually at work at the close of the year and the average daily number of employés was 105,748, as compared with 100,695 in the previous year.

Rajshahi Division.

309. Rajshahi is the only district in the Division in which silk is produced. The quantity of silk manufactured during the year was 67,790 lbs., against 105,569 lbs. in the preceding year. The falling-off is due to the failure of November *bund* brought about by deficient rainfall and the consequent scarcity of mulberry. Ten thousand three hundred and seventy-eight maunds of *ganja* were manufactured during the year under report, against 5,040 maunds in the previous year. The increase is partly due to increase in cultivation and partly to better outturn.

Figures with regard to the tea industry in Jalpaiguri and Darjeeling are given under "Tea."

Various kinds of cotton cloth are largely manufactured at hand-looms in Pabna. Except for some extension of the use of the fly-shuttle there appears to have been no improvement in the method of manufacture.

Dacca Division.

310. Cotton weaving is declining everywhere in the Division, European machine-made piece-goods gradually driving the country-made materials out of the market. The growing taste for European pottery and enamelled iron-ware is also injuriously affecting the local pottery industry. The two steam oil-mills, the one at Dacca and the other at Jhalakati in Backergunge, continued to work profitably during the year.

Chittagong Division.

311. The quantity of tea manufactured in Chittagong during the year under report was 1,369,683 lbs., as compared with 1,281,086 lbs. in 1902. The increase was due to good rain in November. There has been no change in the quality of tea grown. In the Chittagong Hill Tracts, 19,321 lbs. of tea were manufactured, as against 16,610 lbs in the previous year. The increase was due to a favourable season.

Patna Division.

312. Figures with regard to indigo, one of the principal articles of manufacture in this Division, are given above. The outturn of saltpetre was 2,48,917 maunds.

Sugar is manufactured, more or less, in all the districts of the Division except Patna, where only a small amount of coarse sugar and sugarcandy is manufactured in the Bihar subdivision.

In Shahabad the estimated area under sugarcane is 36,000 acres. The chief places of manufacture of sugar are Nasriganj and Jagdispore, but these places cannot compete with the Mauritius sugar, which is sold in large quantities in Shahabad at rates cheaper than those for local sugar. In the Saran district the number of sugar refineries declined during the year under report from 122 to 119, but the outturn and value of sugar in the district are said to be 58,674 maunds and Rs. 4,49,063 respectively, as against 51,720 maunds and Rs. 4,05,140 respectively in the previous year. The increase in the outturn is due to the manufacture of a considerable quantity of sugar during the year at an indigo factory which has lately imported machinery for the purpose.

In Champaran the outturn was estimated at 19,072 maunds, against 18,852 maunds in the previous year. In Darbhanga sugar to the value of Rs. 3,07,337 was manufactured during the year under report. It is difficult to speak definitely as to the effect of the imposition of countervailing duties on bounty-fed sugar. The imports have not diminished and the position of the native sugar refineries has not improved. The total outturn of the mica mines in the district of Gaya was 3,332 maunds during the year under report.

Bhagalpur Division.

313. The two silk factories in the district of Malda turned out 23,159 lbs. of raw silk, against 33,040 lbs. in the previous year. This large falling off was due to unfavourable weather which prejudicially affected the cocoons. As reported last year, the manufacture of country cloth is gradually dying out owing to the competition of cheap European piece-goods. Experiments with fly-shuttle looms have not so far proved a success.

The manufacture of firearms is specially confined to the town of Monghyr. The number exported during the year under report was 899, as against 859 in the preceding year. The manufacture of *bidri* wares was once an important artistic industry in Purnea, but it is steadily declining and is now confined

to a very few families in the town and suburbs of Purnea. Some interesting experiments in the production of *rhea fibre* were made in the Madhipura sub-division of Bhagalpur. The six coal mines in the Sonthal Parganas yielded 2,361 tons of coal, against 2,226 tons in the previous year.

Orissa Division.

314. There is no manufacture of any importance in this Division. There are no mines in this Division, but laterite, sandstone, limestone, gravel, etc., are quarried for building and road-metalling purposes.

Chota Nagpur Division.

315. Lac is produced throughout the Division, but factories for the manufacture of shellac exist only in the districts of Ranchi and Manbhum. The lac trade has not improved during the year owing to abnormally low prices of shellac in consequence of the overstocked Calcutta market. In Manbhum there were altogether 54 factories working during the year, as against 48 in the previous year. Owing to a deficient crop, the price of raw lac ruled high during the year under report. As reported last year, the tea industry in Hazaribagh is gradually dying out. Tea is now grown in one garden only and the work of that garden is reported to be dull. However, the total quantity of tea manufactured was 3,720 lbs., against 2,000 lbs. in the previous year. The number of gardens working at Ranchi during the year was the same as in the previous year, with an outturn of 305,730 lbs. of manufactured tea, against 311,171 lbs. in the previous year. The year was not very favourable for tea in this district owing to the late breaking of the rains. The chief feature of the year's working has been the introduction in some of the gardens of the manufacture of green tea, which has proved very successful in enhancing the value of the tea in the district. Tasar cloths are manufactured in Manbhum; during the year under report, the total outturn was 15,860 yards, against 22,205 yards in the preceding year.

Coal is the most important mineral of the districts of Hazaribagh, Palamau and Manbhum. The total output of coal in these districts was 3,517,224 tons. In Hazaribagh the mica mining industry has developed to a considerable extent.

Working of the Mines Act.

316. During the year two circles were constituted in Bengal for the inspection of mines under the Indian Mines Act of 1901. An Inspector has been placed in charge of each, their head-quarters to be respectively Sitarampur and Dhanbad. There were no prosecutions under the Act during the year. The general health of those employed in mines is reported to be good, and much was done by mine-owners to improve the sanitary conditions and arrangements at the mines, and the housing of employés. The wages earned are as a rule considerably in excess of those earned by agricultural labourers. The total number of persons killed and injured was 64 and 68 respectively. Most of the accidents were due to want of care or intelligence on the part of the employés.

Working of the Indian Factories Act.

[Annual Report on the working of the Indian Factories Act in Bengal for 1903: Judicial and Administrative Statistics of British India, section XIX.]

Number of factories and system of work.

317. The number of factories at work at the end of the year under report was the same as at the close of the previous year, that is, 259. Eighteen factories were brought under the operation of the Act during the year, while a similar number were removed from the list. The work was carried on in 95 factories by shifts or sets, in 111 with midday stoppages, in 9 by a combination of shifts and midday stoppages, and in 24 with other arrangements; while no returns were submitted by the remaining 20 factories, of which 12 were at work for a part of the year only, and 8 did not work at all during the year. The average daily number of operatives (men, women, and children) in the mills was 213,014, as compared with 205,152 in the year 1902.

Inspections.

318. Inspections were made of 39 factories once, of 50 twice, of 45 three times, and of 115 more than three times. Of the 10 factories which were not inspected, 8 were not working during the year. Managers of factories are reported to have paid early and careful attention to the remarks recorded by inspecting officers.

Sanitary arrangements and ventilation.

319. The sanitary condition of the factories was generally satisfactory. The Special Inspector of Factories states that in Howrah the drainage outside the mills is in some cases defective. He observes, however, that this state of affairs will doubtless be remedied on the completion of the new municipal

drainage scheme for Howrah which is under consideration at the present time. The septic tank system for the disposal of night-soil has been adopted by a large number of factories; and it is reported that the substitution of these tanks for ordinary latrines has constituted a most important sanitary improvement. Objections having been raised during the year to the discharge of the filtrates, or effluent, of the tanks into the river Hooghly, a Committee was appointed by Government shortly after the close of the year to report on the working of the existing installations in Bengal, and on the means which should be adopted to render the system efficient and free from objection.

Quarters for operatives.

320. Most of the larger factories in the 24-Parganas are provided with quarters for operatives. In Burdwan and Hooghly quarters have been provided in the case only of some of the mills; while in Howrah most of the employés live in their own huts or in lodging-houses.

The condition of the *bustis* occupied by operatives outside the mill compounds in the Burdwan and Presidency Divisions continues to receive attention. In the Serampore subdivision of the Hooghly district, Government has undertaken the improvement of the Rishra *busti*, while the Serampore Municipality is dealing with the area known as "Jadab Chandra Dey's *busti*." The *busti* near the Baranagore Branch Jute Mills at Baliaghatta in the 24-Parganas is still in an insanitary condition owing to defective drainage. In Howrah much remains to be done, but the Municipal authorities are alive to the importance of effecting improvements. Two of the worst *bustis* have already been dealt with, while schemes of improvement have been prepared for the rest, to be taken in hand as funds permit.

Water-supply.

321. Filtered water is provided at nearly all the mills in the 24-Parganas, whereas in Hooghly only three mills, viz., the Victoria Jute Mill, the India Jute Mill, and the Chemical Works at Konnagore, are so supplied. The Commissioner of the Burdwan Division observes that a filtered water-supply is a concession which is much valued by the operatives, and he expresses surprise that the Mill Companies in the latter district have been unable to make greater progress in this respect.

General condition of operatives, &c.

322. The health of the operatives was generally good, and their general condition prosperous. Mill labour is very popular among the labouring classes, the wages paid being considerably in excess of those earned by people of the same social status engaged in other pursuits.

The rules regarding the employment of women and children are reported to have been generally observed.

Accidents.

323. The total number of accidents during the year was 652, as against 683 in the previous year. Of these, 362 were of a slight, and 259 of a serious nature, while 31 proved fatal. The machinery at the factories was in most cases well fenced.

Prosecutions.

324. There were no prosecutions in any district except Hooghly, where the Manager of a local jute mill was fined on two occasions a sum of Rs. 50 under clause (2), section 7, of the Factories Act, for employing children at night.

Trade.

FOREIGN SEA-BORNE TRADE.

[Report on the Maritime Trade of Bengal for 1903-1904.]

325. The trade of the Province rose in 1903-1904 by 11 per cent. in value and represents the highest total hitherto reached. Both imports and exports of merchandise increased, but exports of treasure declined by about 44 lakhs.

326. The extent to which the foreign trade of the Province is centred in Calcutta is apparent from the following figures of the value of the trade in 1903-1904 (000's omitted):—

	The Province.	Calcutta.
	Rs.	Rs.
Merchandise—		
Imports ...	33,64,54	33,49,25
Exports ...	59,96,10	57,25,22
Treasure—		
Imports ...	9,47,69	9,47,69
Exports ...	40,02	40,02

At Chittagong there is a small import trade in railway material, salt, metals, cotton piece-goods, machinery and tea-chests. The export trade likewise is limited to a very few articles, but since the completion of the Assam-Bengal Railway and the facilities for shipment to the United Kingdom provided by starting a direct line of steamers, the export trade in jute and tea has risen to considerable importance, the values during 1903-1904 being 109 lakhs for jute and 102 lakhs for tea. The remaining export is rice, which is also the staple export of the Orissa ports of Balasore, Cuttack and Puri. The aggregate trade of the subordinate ports is, however, in most articles so small a fraction of the whole that in the paragraphs below, reviewing the course of the trade in each important item, the remarks made apply to Calcutta only, unless the trade at any other port is specifically mentioned.

Imports of Merchandise.

[Report on the Maritime Trade of Bengal for 1903-1904.]

327. The 33·49 crores, which represented the value of imported merchandise, were distributed as follows among the principal articles in the import trade (000's omitted):—

		Rs.
Cotton piece-goods, Rs. 14,43,15; „ other fabrics, „ 66,84; „ yarn, „ 49,69	... ...	15,59,68
Iron and steel	... ...	2,78,52
Sugar	... ...	1,83,90
Petroleum—Kerosene, Rs. 1,20,91; Other sorts, „ 22,90	... ...	1,43,81
Machinery and millwork	... ...	1,41,25
Woollen goods	... ...	71,53
Hardware and cutlery	... ...	81,54
Railway material	... ...	32,02
Liquors	... ...	49,67
Drugs and narcotics	... ...	47,51
Apparel	... ...	47,82
Salt	... ...	52,13

Cotton-goods and yarns.

328. Nearly forty-seven per cent. of the aggregate is represented by the trade in cotton-goods and yarns. The extraordinary rise and erratic fluctuations in the price of raw cotton caused by a short crop in America and the gigantic operations of American speculators led to a serious crisis in the cotton industry which is reflected in the imports, for instead of the improvement that usually accompanies a season of agricultural prosperity, the total value, notwithstanding much higher prices, decreased by 2·7 per cent.

The imports of yarn were less in quantity by nearly 23 per cent. White piece-goods showed some recovery, but there was so heavy a reduction in grey goods that the total importations of piece-goods fell by 7·9 per cent. in quantity and 3·8 per cent. in value. In other cotton fabrics, of which more are of foreign than British origin, there was an improvement of 52 per cent., but their value, about 67 lakhs, is relatively small.

Metals.

329. Imports of metals in the past year reached a higher value than in any previous year. In 1903-1904 all descriptions of metals shared in the increase, with the exception of wrought brass, and German silver. The expansion in steel imports was greater than in iron, the trade being the highest on record.

The value of the trade in machinery and millwork has considerably improved, though it was below the large importation of 1901-1902. Imports of steam-engines and their parts fell off slightly, but imports of other sorts of machinery increased by nearly 25 lakhs. The jute mills of Bengal mainly contributed to this increase by large importations for extensions of weaving machinery and for renewals.

330. The average price of all refined sugar imported rose from Rs. 9-0-11 in 1902-1903 to Rs. 9-5-10 per cwt. in 1903-1904. The imports of all sugar excluding molasses rose in quantity by 24·6 per cent., and in value by 28·8 per cent. The chief event of the year in connection with the sugar trade was the coming into operation from the 1st September 1903 of the Brussel's Convention and the consequent abolition of bounties in the countries which were parties thereto. The decision to remove the countervailing duties on sugar produced in those countries after the 31st August 1904 was not, however, notified till December so that the absence of most Continental sugar continued till February, when considerable imports from Austria-Hungary recommenced. The exclusion of beet sugar gave a great stimulus to imports of cane sugar from Java, Mauritius and the United Kingdom. The considerable drop in imports from China is due to the fact that Hong-Kong depends upon Java for its raw material. With a regular line between its ports and Calcutta, Java, however, is now in a position to ship to this port with greater profit to itself and at the same time at rates with which China cannot compete. Consequently the imports from Java increased by 64·7 per cent. and amounted to 45·7 per cent. of the total. From Mauritius also there was an increase of 43·3 per cent. The large and practically new trade from the United Kingdom is due to the Liverpool and Greenock refineries obtaining large supplies of West Indian and other sugars which having received no bounties were suitable for export to the Indian market.

Petroleum.

331. The importations of kerosene-oil from Russia and the United States fell from 34 million gallons in 1902-1903 to 23 in the year under report. On the other hand, the imports of kerosene from Burma increased from 14¾ to 26½ million gallons. The greatest fall was in Russian oil, which may be attributed to the increasing competition of the Burma product, and in the past year to the considerable importations of oil from Borneo and Sumatra both direct from those countries and from the Straits Settlements.

Woollen piece-goods.

332. There was a recovery in the imports of these goods and the total increase in value amounted to 41·6 per cent. Piece-goods rose by 9·9 per cent., and shawls by as much as 108·8 per cent.

Salt.

333. Imports of salt increased in quantity by 6·3 per cent. Importations from Indian ports had fallen off in 1902-1903 and in the year under review there was a further decrease. Of the foreign imports, 53·6 per cent. came from the United Kingdom. The lower rate of duty appears to have affected consumption but little.

Import trade of Calcutta with European countries.

334. The articles enumerated above constitute the bulk of the import trade at Calcutta, and it is unnecessary to notice in detail the other articles which enter into the trade, the items individually being of relatively small value.

About three-fourths of the value of the import trade of Calcutta represent in 1903-1904 the value of imports from Europe, British trade easily dominating, for to the extent of 62·1 per cent. the import trade is from the United Kingdom. Belgium, Germany and Russia have the largest trade with Calcutta of countries in Continental Europe. The imports into Calcutta from Russia declined by 21 per cent. Petroleum is virtually the only import from Russia and by far the most important from the United States. From Belgium metals (principally iron and steel) constituted about 56 per cent. of the total imports from that country, and from Germany the chief imports were woollen shawls and metals, chiefly steel. It should be noted, however, that the origin of imports is imperfectly shown in the returns of trade and that much trade credited to Belgium is really of German origin. Amongst Asiatic countries the largest part of the import trade is conducted with China, Ceylon, Java and the Straits.

Exports of Merchandise.

[Report on the Maritime Trade of Bengal for 1903-1904.]

335. The value of the export trade of the Province after a smart decline in 1902-1903 to below 54 crores, rose in 1903-1904 to nearly 60 crores, the increase being most apparent in opium, grain and pulse, tea and lac.

Long as is the list of articles exported from Calcutta, the greater part of the value of the trade attaches to the few articles enumerated below (000's omitted):-

					Rs.
Jute, raw,	Rs. 10,56,69		...	...	19,98,34
" manufactured, "	9,41,65				
Tea ...	...	...	...	...	6,85,76
Opium ...	...	...	...	...	7,04,08
Hides and skins	...	...	...	...	4,82,99
Grain and pulse	...	...	...	...	5,91,34
Oilseeds	...	...	...	...	4,53,04
Lac ...	...	...	...	...	2,68,99
Cotton, raw	...	...	...	...	73,30
Indigo ...	...	...	...	...	60,13

Jute and Jute goods.

336. The value of jute and of the goods manufactured from it (gunny-bags and cloth) represents more than a third of the aggregate value of the foreign trade of Calcutta, and if account is taken of the great quantity of jute manufactures exported from Calcutta by rail and coastwise for the packing of Indian produce together with the quantity used on the spot for the same purpose, the importance to the trade of Calcutta of the jute fields of Eastern Bengal, and the jute-mills established along the banks of the Hooghly is still more striking. A rough idea of the gross value may be formed by adding to the exports of raw jute, the annual production of the jute-mills which for the year 1903-1904 has been estimated to be about 1,280 lakhs or 8½ millions sterling.

The exports of raw jute from Calcutta amounting to nearly 3·49 million bales, though larger than in the previous year, were below the large exports of 1901-1902. The season was favourable, for the final forecast estimated a 15-anna crop, and an increase of the area equivalent to 9·4 per cent. The total value of the trade in jute and jute goods rose by 3 per cent. and is the highest recorded. Direct shipments of raw jute from Chittagong increased by 60·5 per cent.

The striking feature of the trade in jute manufactures was the large expansion in exports to South America. Chilli and Peru took goods to an increased value of 6 lakhs, and in Argentina, where during the year both the grain and oilseed crops were most abundant, the shipments rose in value by 52 lakhs. Owing to abundant crops in Australasia exports thereto increased by 46·1 per cent., and in consequence of an enhanced demand from Cuba exports to the West Indies increased by 60·9 per cent. A considerable decrease occurred in exports to the Straits Settlements, Hong-Kong, the China Treaty Ports, as also to South Africa. The United States absorbed 34 per cent. of the total shipments of bags and cloth, South America 18 per cent., Australia 13 per cent., and the United Kingdom 8·3 per cent.

337. Exports of tea to the United Kingdom and foreign countries amounted to 195 millions, of which 27½ million lbs. were shipped from Chittagong. This total which is the highest recorded is 14 per cent. in advance of the exports of the previous years and exceeds the large shipments of 1900-1901 by 13 million lbs. The year was remarkable for a very generous growth of leaf of generally poor quality, and fortunately this coincided with a strong demand for cheap grades of tea. The average price realised at the London sales was only one-fifth of a penny per pound higher than in the previous season, but at Calcutta sales where the prices of the better grades were not so flat, the improvement was seven-twelfths of an anna. The quantity offered at the local sales rose from 47½ to 58 million lbs and the exports to "outside" markets increased from 29¼ to 38 million lbs. The most remarkable expansion was in the trade with Russia, for the purchases by Russian buyers amounted to 11¼ million lbs. and including 4,905,000 lbs. consigned to Dalny, 9,452,000 lbs. were shipped direct to Russian ports. The funds collected under the Tea Cess Act on exports from Bengal, which amounted to Rs. 2,15,000, were expended in aiding by advertisement and contributions, the sale and consumption of tea and by granting a bonus of six pies per lb. on 2½ million lbs. of green tea exported by sea. The market in Northern India was also assiduously developed throughout the year by the Indian Tea Expansion Commission whose three years' agreement has since terminated on the 31st July 1904.

338. The exports of opium increased in quantity by 64 chests, but the value rose by about 28 per cent. The failure of the China crop caused an extra-ordinary demand for Indian opium and sent up the price to a very high level. The maximum price was Rs. 1,765 per chest in February 1904 and the average for the year of Rs. 1,460 is the highest reached since 1861-62. Opium.

339. The total quantity exported rose by 1·8 per cent., and the value improved by 5·8 per cent. Hides fell off in quantity by 1·4 per cent., but rose in value by 3·2 per cent. Raw skins rose in quantity by 13·6 per cent., and in value by about 10 per cent. Nearly 85 per cent. of the trade in raw skins is with the United States, where they are in great demand for the manufacture of chrome leather. Hides and Skins.

340. Exports show a remarkable expansion, having increased in quantity by 34·1 per cent., and in value by 28·4 per cent. The shipments of rice from Calcutta to foreign ports during 1903-1904 dropped by about 2½ per cent., but in the exports from all the provincial ports there was a small advance. Still the trade in rice has been at a comparatively low level during the last three years. On the other hand, the export of wheat and wheat-flour were the largest since 1886-87, the increase being 339 per cent. in quantity and 315 per cent. in value. An excellent harvest in India brought down the price of wheat and left an ample margin of profit on shipments to Europe where the deficiency of American supplies had caused Indian wheat to be in good demand. Grain and Pulse.

341. Among oilseeds the exports of linseed are by far the largest, the rise in quantity was 32·1 per cent., but as the result of much lower prices, the value dropped by nearly 2 per cent. The highly remunerative prices realised for linseed in 1901 and 1902 induced a great increase of its cultivation throughout the world, and especially in Argentina, where the yield in 1903 was extraordinarily abundant. This large addition to the world's supply brought down the price of linseed to a lower level than it had touched since 1862, and the prices of most other oilseeds were similarly depressed. Of rapeseed, which is the next largest item, the exports from Calcutta fell in quantity by 17 per cent. and in value by 15·6 per cent., for owing to a deficiency in the Bengal crop smaller supplies were available for export. Oilseeds.

342. Exports of indigo showed an improvement in quantity by 1½ per cent., but a decline in value of nearly 9 per cent. Except in Bengal where the acreage continued to fall slightly, indigo was more largely grown than in 1902 and the yield was everywhere much superior. The larger supplies concurrently with a much restricted demand from cotton printers, owing to the abnormally high prices of raw cotton, had an unfavourable effect on the prices of both natural and synthetic indigo, and the average price for Bengal indigo was 10 per cent. lower than in the previous years. Owing to the low range of prices supplies did not come forward readily, and a larger proportion of the crop than usual was kept back for shipment in the following year. There was a fall of 80 per cent. in the exports to Japan and not a single chest was shipped after July, for dating from the 1st April 1903, the import duty on Indian indigo entering Japan was raised from 12,952 yen to 21,422 yen per picul, equal to an additional taxation of Rs. 7-3-6 per factory maund, while indigo from all other countries, owing to the most favoured nation clause in their treaties, continued to pay the former conventional duty. The competition of synthetic indigo continued to be the ruling factor in determining prices, and the growing exports from Germany clearly demonstrate a rapid increase of its consumption. Indigo.

343. The quantity exported was 490,000 tons as against 429,000 tons in 1902-1903. The principal foreign markets supplied were Colombo, Singapore, Aden, Mauritius, Sumatra and East Africa. Bengal coal lost ground at Colombo, but it improved its position at Singapore. The total foreign exports, including bunker coal, amounted to 1,201,634 tons and the coasting exports to 1,504,000 tons of which 817,000 tons were consigned to Bombay, 287,500 tons, to Burma and 279,500 tons to Madras. The year was not a profitable one to the coal industry owing to the continuous fall in prices and in contrast to the rapid progress of former years, the output of 6,361,200 tons was less than 2 per cent. greater than in 1902. Coal.

344. The striking feature of this trade in 1903-1904 was the remarkable expansion in price, the average export price being Rs. 116-5 per cwt. as compared with Rs. 77-9 in the previous year, or an increase of 50 per cent. Lac.

The price in December for the best qualities was Rs. 125 per bazaar maund, which is the highest obtained for 29 years.

Cotton, raw.

345. The exports decreased in quantity by 14·2 per cent. but in value by only 2·7 per cent., for the average price per cwt. was Rs. 28-2-10 compared with Rs. 24-13-7 in 1902-1903. The past year was distinguished by a very high range of prices, the result of speculation on a gigantic scale combined with a certain limitation of the supply. There was a greatly increased export from British India to meet the phenomenal demand, namely, from 6,045,000 cwt. to 7,931,000 cwt., but Bengal did not participate in this larger demand as the trade in cotton declined.

Export trade of Calcutta with European countries.

346. About 54 per cent. of the export trade of Calcutta is conducted with European countries, the United Kingdom taking about 31 per cent. of the whole. Of the Continental countries, Germany took almost as much as all the others combined and was third on the general list. Of other countries the trade with the United States came next to that with the United Kingdom, and China which occupied the fourth place, had a trade slightly less than that with Germany.

Chittagong and Orissa Ports.

[Report on the Maritime Trade of Bengal for 1903-1904, Foreign Trade of the Subordinate Ports.]

Chittagong.

347. The running of a direct line of steamers from this port to the United Kingdom, and the through connection with Assam established by the completion of the Assam-Bengal Railway, have caused a large increase in the foreign trade, the total value being 250·66 lakhs, against 169·71 lakhs in 1902-1903. The main features of the trade are indicated in the following table 00,000 in Rs. omitted):—

	Imports.			Exports.	
	1902-1903.	1903-1904.		1902-1903.	1903-1904.
Salt ...	3·28	2·32	Rice ...	11·41	23·57
Railway materials	7·75	7·16	Jute (raw) ...	65·31	109·22
Tea-chests	2·21	2·16	Tea ...	75·01	102·41
Other articles ...	3·55	3·64	Other articles ...	·19	18
Total ...	16·79	15·28	Total	152·92	235·38

Orissa Ports.

348. The foreign trade of the Orissa ports is of no importance, and represented in merchandise a value of 35 lakhs in 1903-1904, against 29 lakhs in the preceding year. The only article is rice and more than one-half of this was exported from Cuttack.

Frontier Trade.

[Report on the trade of Bengal with Nepal, Tibet, Sikkim and Bhutan for 1903-1904, Tables I and II.]

349. The trade with each of the transfrontier countries in merchandise is stated in the figures appended (lakhs of rupees):—

	Imports.		Exports.	
	1902-1903.	1903-1904.	1902-1903.	1903-1904.
Nepal ...	141·79	146·94	91·33	88·98
Tibet ...	9·63	3·57	8·11	3·92
Sikkim ...	3·43	3·10	2·74	3·11
Bhutan ...	4·16	7·01	1·16	1·19

The bulk of the imports from Nepal consists of agricultural and pastoral products and the trade is therefore liable to large fluctuations from seasonal causes. From the fertile tracts in and near the Terai which are tapped by the railway, are received in increasing quantities the food-grains which form more than half the imports from Nepal. The cultivation of jute in Nepal would seem to be increasing, for the imports in 1903-1904 (1,90,045 maunds) are two and-a-half times larger than the figures of 1898-1899. The other

ncipal imports are cattle, hides and skins, provisions, and oilseeds, mainly seed, mustard and rapeseed, in all of which, except linseed, there was a falling off as compared with 1902-1903. The chief staples of export are cotton goods which formed 41 per cent. of the total exports in 1903-1904, metals, petroleum, provisions (other than fish and ghi), salt and sugar. The decrease in the value of exports was chiefly in cotton piece-goods and yarn the trade in which has steadily fallen as prices have risen. Among the metals exported, brass and copper have decreased by about a lakh of rupees, but iron and other metals have increased in value by three and three-quarter lakhs of rupees.

The trade of Bengal with Tibet, which is registered at Yatung, was pratically at a standstill during the last six months of the year, for the despatch of the British Mission to Tibet and the military operations resulting from the armed opposition to its progress closed the trade route and an edict was issued by the Tibetan Government on the 15th October interdicting all trade with British India. The chief imports from Tibet are raw wool, which formed 83 per cent. of the total imports in 1903-1904, musk, yaks' tails, lambs' skins, and, in ordinary years, ponies and mules. The principal exports are goods made of cotton (chiefly Indian piece-goods), silk and wool, metals, precious stones, glass and coral ornaments, tobacco and many miscellaneous articles. The obstacles to the expansion of the trade of Tibet have hitherto been the difficulties and expenses of transport, the trading monopoly enjoyed by the Lamas, which accounts for the exclusion of Indian tea, and their hostility to everything promoting the growth of commercial relations with India. An opening is now, however, afforded to trade by the provisions of the recent treaty with Tibet, for despite the apparent poverty of the country, its resources can probably be greatly developed by commercial exploitation.

The trade with Sikkim was, as usual, on a very small scale. Fruits, nuts, vegetables and cereals were the principal articles of import, and cotton goods and salt of export. The trade with Bhutan, which is always insignificant, improved in the past year by about 54 per cent. owing almost entirely to the increase in the imports of timber, the value of which amounted to Rs. 4,45,609 against Rs. 1,81,000 in the preceding year.

Coasting Trade.

[Report on the Maritime Trade of Bengal for 1903-1904.]

350. Of this trade 87·5 per cent. of the value appertains to Calcutta, of which the actual figures were, in Rs. (000's omitted):—

	1902-1903.	1903-1904.
	Rs.	Rs.
Imports—		
Merchandise	4,84,57	4,94,48
Treasure	19,88	9,53
Exports—		
Merchandise	6,34,34	6,66,10
Treasure	1,15,95	59,92
Total ...	12,54,74	12,30,03

The slight increase in the imports of merchandise was due chiefly to a much larger trade in kerosene-oil from Burma, and also to larger imports of cotton twist and yarn, salt, cocoanut oil, oilseeds and unrefined sugar from Madras. As a set-off against these increases, there was a decline in the trade of rice, spices, and teakwood from Burma, raw cotton, turmeric and spices from Madras and twist and yarn and salt from Bombay. The transactions in silver fell by 52 per cent. and consisted mainly of silver from Burma and Bengal ports.

The increase in exports of merchandise was mainly due to larger shipments of cotton twist and rice to Bombay and Madras, pulse to Burma, and kerosene-oil to Sind. On the other hand there was a decline in the exports of coals, jute manufactures and tobacco leaf. Exports of treasure fell by 48 per cent. Only silver was exported, chiefly to Burma for the purpose of financing the rice crops.

Chittagong.

351. The total value of the coasting trade rose from 113½ lakhs to 117⅛ lakhs, or by nearly 4 per cent. Imports declined from 71¾ to 60¾ lakhs; but exports rose from 41¾ to 56½ lakhs. All the principal articles of import were imported in smaller quantity. The advance in the export trade was noticeable in paddy and rice, raw cotton and hides and skins.

Orissa Ports.

352. The ports of Cuttack and Puri have practically no import trade and rice and paddy are the only products exported; the exports rose from 10,542 cwt. to 38,494 cwt., or by 265 per cent. The imports of Balasore decreased by 8·96 lakhs owing to a much smaller trade in cotton twist and yarn; but exports of rice and paddy rose from 142,371 cwt. to 206,320 cwt., or by 44·9 per cent.

Railway and River Trade.

[Report on the Trade carried by Rail and River in Bengal in 1903-1904, Tables I and II.]

353. The total volume of this trade, the estimated value of it, and its main divisions are exhibited in the following table:—

		Trade of Calcutta with Bengal.		Trade of Calcutta with other Provinces.		Trade of Bengal with other Provinces, but not with Calcutta.	
		Import.	Export.	Import.	Export.	Import.	Export.
1902-1903	Mds.	12,40,68,715	2,67,05,647	1,74,26,035	74,72,525	2,15,52,146	3,32,66,744
	Rs.	37,13,73,049	21,96,00,166	13,93,25,600	10,62,37,584	9,39,53,115	6,74,73,436
1903-1904	Mds.	14,25,43,702	2,75,12,845	2,35,82,748	73,81,062	2,02,45,080	3,18,86,794
	Rs.	40,14,30,096	23,90,72,238	17,88,06,766	11,23,58,920	8,48,80,958	6,81,70,350

The value of the trade of Calcutta with Bengal represents 69 per cent. of the total imports and 68 per cent. of the total exports, and consists of the following principal articles in the order of relative importance imported into Calcutta from Bengal, namely, jute, coal, rice, opium, linseed, tea, hides and skins, gram and pulse, silk, gunny-bags and cloth, and indigo; and of articles exported from Calcutta to Bengal, cotton manufactures, salt, metals, sugar, railway plant and rolling-stock, and oils.

The trade of Calcutta with other Provinces is mainly with the United Provinces and with Assam, and consists of the following principal imports into Calcutta, namely, tea, opium, wheat, oilseeds, cotton raw, hides and skins, ghi, gram and pulse, lac and woollen goods; and of exports from Calcutta cotton goods, metals and manufactures thereof, sugar, gunny-bags, salt, oils, and grain and pulse.

Estimated by value the trade of Bengal with other Provinces by rail and river represents 26 per cent. of the total imports, and 14 per cent. of the total exports. The principal articles imported into Bengal from the United Provinces were opium, sugar, oilseeds, cotton goods, gram and pulse, and wheat chiefly; from Assam tea, paddy, timber, coal, oilseeds, hides and skins mainly; and from the Central Provinces, railway plant, rolling-stock, cotton manufactures (chiefly twist and yarn), oilseeds and rice; while the chief exports from Bengal to the United Provinces consisted of coal, rice, lac, sugar, gunny-bags and cloth, kerosene, tobacco, metals, railway plant and rolling-stock, and spices; to Assam of rice, spices, sugar, tobacco, kerosene oil, gram and pulse, and gunny-bags and cloth; and to the Central Provinces of sugar, coal, railway plant and rolling-stock, kerosene oil and raw silk.

Buildings and Roads.

[The details of outlay by the Public Works Department will be found in the Finance Accounts issued annually by the Examiner of Public Works Accounts.]

354. The total outlay of the year by the Public Works Department and local authorities on works amounted to Rs. 1,43,43,751. The expenditure incurred by the Public Works Department was Rs. 92,69,416, and by local authorities Rs. 50,74,335. Of the former sum, Rs. 15,56,615 was expended on Imperial Works, Rs. 74,39,073 on Provincial Works and Rs. 2,73,728 on Local and Contribution Works.

I.—IMPERIAL WORKS.

355. Six hundred feet of additional sea-wall, a skin revetment wall, and a revetment wall for the dock were erected at Chandipur. A magazine was constructed on the Small Arms Ammunition Range at Balasore. **Military works. Civil works.**

356. Additions and improvements were made at the salt golas at Sulkea. **Salt.**

357. Extra accommodation was provided in the old and new opium godowns, Calcutta, for storing the large outturn of the season and in the Patna Opium Factory several works were in progress. Quarters were built for the Assistant Opium Agents at Gaya and Tehta, and a beginning made in the establishment of weighment and settlement centres in the mufassal. **Opium.**

358. Marble was laid on the floors of the Rotunda and other portions of the General Post Office, Calcutta, used by the public. The Post Offices at Narayanganj, Ranchi, Suri, Burdwan, Madhupur, Raniganj, Purulia, and Chapra underwent additions or alterations or both. The combined Post and Telegraph Office at Phulbani was completed, and combined Post and Telegraph Offices were in progress at Jamalpur and Bihar. Materials were collected for new offices at Chandpur and Laheria Serai. A new Telegraph Office at Saidpur was finished, and another commenced at Mymensingh. **Post and Telegraph Offices.**

359. The combined Foreign and Military Secretariat building at Calcutta was still under construction. The north and centre blocks were finished, but the completion of the south or front block was delayed owing to the slow progress of the stone-work. **Secretariat Buildings.**

360. Electric fans were installed in the Surveyor-General's office and the Mathematical Instrument Office. Electrical power was substituted for steam power for working the machines in the Photo-Litho Office. The check station at Barrackpore in connection with the Magnetic Survey of India was finished, and the buildings were brought into use. **Surveyor-General's Office.**

II.—PROVINCIAL WORKS.

361. The Deputy Magistrate's Court-house at Comilla, the additional building for the Bhagalpur Collectorate, the Certificate Office at Burdwan, and the Settlement Office, together with the building to accommodate the records of the Commissioner and of the Judicial Commissioner of Chota Nagpur, at Ranchi, were all completed. The cutcherry building at Binda Diara, Monghyr, was reconstructed. At Muzaffarpur a new Magistrate's Court building was nearly completed, but record-racks, court-room fittings and furniture had still to be provided. Additions and improvements were completed or in progress at Arambagh, Burdwan, Bankipore, Chapra, Suri, Gaya and Arrah. **Collectorates.**

362. At Alipore the Judge's and Munsif's Courts were fitted up with electric lights and fans, extensions were being made to the Munsif's Court and Pleaders' Library, and a new building was begun for the accommodation of three Subordinate Judges, with their offices, and the Accounts Department. The additions and alterations to the existing Court buildings at Monghyr to provide accommodation for the Civil Courts, and the new Judge's Court at Bankipore, were completed. Single munsifis were constructed at Nawabganj, Ampta and Balasore. Double munsifis at Chandpur, Kishanganj and Baruipur were nearly finished. Improvements were carried out in the double munsifi at Begusorai. Fair progress was made with the double munsifi at Bolpur, and the single munsifi at Burdwan. A triple munsifi was erected at Madaripur. The old Civil Court building at Bankipore was converted into a triple munsifi. A quadruple munsifi at Pirojpur was well advanced. Materials were collected for the construction of a triple munsifi at Narail, and single munsifis at Raghunathpur and Chuadanga. Works were completed or in progress for the improvement of the Civil Courts at Barisal, Bankura, Giridih, Dantoon, Chittagong, Puri, Sitamarhi, Cox's Bazar and Hathhazari. **Civil Courts.**

363. Good progress was made with the new subdivisional buildings at Balurghat in the Dinajpur district. In connection with the reconstitution of the Barrackpore subdivision No. 75, Parade Road, Barrackpore, was purchased, and considerable alterations and repairs were being carried out to convert it into a Court-house. Subdivisional Court-houses were constructed at Kishanganj and Phulbani. Works for the provision of additional accommodation were completed or in progress in Subdivisional Courts at Brahmanbaria, Bettiah, **Subdivisional Courts and Residences.**

Madhubani, Jahanabad, Barh, Kendrapara, Jhenida, Feni and Chandpur. New quarters were built for the Subdivisional Officers at Sitamarhi, Phulbani and Madhubani, and the new quarters for the Subdivisional Officers at Sirajganj and Kishanganj were well advanced. Additions and alterations were in progress to the Subdivisional Officer's quarters at Deoghur. Quarters were built for the third Officer at Angul. Quarters for the junior Deputy Magistrate at Daltonganj were commenced.

Munsifs' Quarters.

364. Two sets of Munsifs' quarters at Patuakhali, and one set each at Atia (Tangail) and Daltonganj, were completed. Three sets of quarters at Chandpur, two sets at Satkhira, and one set each at Sundip, Chatra and Hajipur, were in progress, those at Chandpur and Sundip being well advanced. Materials were collected for one set of quarters at Bhudrak.

Circuit-houses.

365. In order to supply the want of suitable circuit-houses at Ranchi and Cuttack for the use of the Head of the Province, and other high Government officials, the improvement of the existing circuit-house at the former place was taken in hand, and materials were collected for the construction of a new circuit-house within the Fort at the latter station. Good progress was made with the Asansol circuit-house, and with the work of converting the old khas mahal office at Daltonganj into a circuit-house. The old mess-house at Berhampore was purchased by Government and converted into a circuit-house.

Excise.

366. A distillery was constructed at Lalpur in the district of Ranchi, and one was in progress at Pakour. Improvements and additions were made to the distillery buildings at Dacca, and several new gauja godowns were constructed.

Monuments and Antiquities.

367. The work of commemorating houses in Calcutta and in the mufassal in which distinguished public men, European and Indian, formerly resided, was nearly finished. A tablet was erected in the cemetery at Gnatong to the memory of those who died between the years 1888 and 1898. A tablet was placed in the north verandah of the little house at Arrah to the memory of the British officers and men who defended it against the mutineers in 1857.

High Court.

368. Premises Nos. 4 and 5, Old Post Office Street, Calcutta, were acquired at a cost of Rs. 2,12,100 with a view to the construction of an additional building for the High Court to provide for increasing requirements.

Jails.

369. As it was decided to make over the site now occupied by the Presidency Jail for the Victoria Memorial Hall, land was acquired at Alipore for the construction of a new Presidency Jail, and nine barracks and three blocks of cells were started. The four new barracks in the Dacca, Faridpur, Rajshahi and Bankipore Jails were completed, and one double-storied barrack in the Chittagong Jail was nearly finished. The Sub-jail at Phulbani and the lock-up at Kishanganj were completed. Works were completed or in progress for the improvement of numerous other jails and sub-jails in the Province.

Police.

370. Premises Nos. 52 to 57, Kurriah Road, with adjoining land were acquired for the accommodation of the police of the Ballygunge section. The barrack for the Reserve Police at Daltonganj, the thana and barrack at Phulbani, and the new police-station at Siliguri, were completed. A house was purchased for the quarters of the Assistant Superintendents of Police undergoing training at the Police Training School, Bhagalpur, thorough repairs were carried out to the building, and out-houses were provided for it. Quarters for Inspectors of Police were built at Patuakhali, Chaibassa, Phulbani and Arrah, similar buildings were under construction at Purulia, Gumla, Bankura and Laheria Serai, and materials were collected for others at Pirojpur, Faridpur, Bankipore, Patna and Hajipur.

Educational.

371. It was decided to remove the Dacca College to a more suitable site away from the heart of the town, and land for the construction of the new College buildings was under acquisition and bricks were collected. Materials were collected for the Ahsanulla Engineering School, which is to be built on a portion of the land acquired for the new Dacca College. A Training College for teachers at the same place was well advanced. The isolation hospital and the new barracks for native students in the Civil Engineering College, Sibpur, were completed. At Cuttack materials were collected for constructing a new block for the Ravenshaw College, and also for rebuilding on an extended scale a portion of the Ravenshaw Collegiate school building which was dismantled. A school

building was constructed at Phulbani. Extra accommodation was provided for the zilla schools at Noakhali, Daltonganj and Bankura. Good progress was made with the reconstruction of the Dumka Zilla School building. During the year much was done to provide and improve hostel and boarding-house accommodation.

Medical.

372. At the Presidency General Hospital several small improvements were effected. At the Medical College, Calcutta, the Pathological block was finished, and was being fitted up, land was acquired for the proposed Nurses' Quarters and for the new Surgical Ward, and some materials were collected for the construction of the former. Improvements were carried out in the students' quarters at the Temple Medical School, Bankipore. Dispensaries were constructed at Juggurnathpur, in the Singhbhum district, and Phulbani. Eleven mortuaries were built at Munshiganj, Bishenpur, Kalna, Malda, Madhipura, Ulubaria, Katwa, Khurda, Aurungabad, Nawadah and Tikari; four were in progress at Jamui, Banka, Supaul, and Kishanganj; and materials were collected for four others at Jhenida, Magura, Narail and Bongaon. All the buildings of the Central Lunatic Asylum at Berhampore were completed, and a house was purchased for the quarters of the Superintendent of the Asylum.

Registration.

373. The Registration office at Dacca was extended, and new offices provided at Suri and Purulia. An office at Chittagong was nearly finished.

Contribution works.

374. The zanana hospital and operating-room at Midnapore were completed. Work in connection with the new hospital at Muzaffarpur was continued; the dispensary building, and quarters for the Assistant Surgeon, midwife, compounders and servants were finished, and the infectious diseases ward and private ward were half completed. At the General Hospital, Cuttack, an eye ward was built up to seven feet, and materials were collected for the construction of an operating-room, and a female Medical and Surgical ward. Materials for the construction of a central hospital at Balasore, as a grant-in-aid work, were collected, and the foundations of the building excavated. The school portion of the Diocesan Girls' School, Darjeeling, was practically completed, and good progress was made with the Sisters' block and Chapel. At the Zoological Gardens, Alipore, several improvements were made.

Official Residences.

375. The premises No. 29, Chowringhee, occupied by the Commissioner of Police, Calcutta, were sold by Government to the United Service Club and in its place the premises No. 2, Kyd Street were acquired and some necessary additions and alterations were done to them. Houses were purchased or acquired by Government for the residence of the Commissioner at Bhagalpur, the Judicial Commissioner of Chota Nagpur at Ranchi, and for officers at Suri, Berhampore, Cuttack, Midnapore, Motihari, Chaibassa and Puri. A residence was built for the Settlement Officer at Ranchi. Quarters for the Assistant Superintendent of Police, Sirajganj, were nearly completed. Three barracks belonging to the estate of General Lamb at Berhampore were acquired for residences, and materials were collected for the construction of residences for the Civil Surgeon, Mymensingh, and the District Superintendent of Police, Puri.

Miscellaneous.

376. At the Veterinary Institution, Belgachia, various improvements were carried out. The trial boring on the Japanese Kazusa system, commenced last year in the compound of the circuit-house at Purulia, had to be abandoned after proceeding a certain depth, as difficulties were met with which could not be overcome. Installation of electric light and fans was carried out in numerous buildings not mentioned above.

Communications.

District.

Midnapore.

377. The new dâk bungalow at Midnapore was completed. Arrangements are being made for proceeding with the construction of a like building at Contai road station.

In this district an estimate amounting to Rs. 70,401 was sanctioned for metalling the road from Debra to Sabang *viâ* Balichak as a feeder to the Bengal-Nagpur Railway and Rs. 31,147 were allotted for expenditure during the year.

Howrah.

378. Sanction has been accorded to the reconstruction of the Buckland bridge at Howrah to adapt it for the carriage of electric tramways at a net cost of Rs. 4,32,129. Of this sum the East Indian Railway will pay

Rs. 2,07,949, and the balance will be paid by the Municipality, to whom a loan has been granted by Government for the purpose.

Nadia.

379. A grant of Rs. 20,000 was given to the District Board of Nadia for the completion of the feeder road from Bharamara Railway Station to Taragonia.

Murshidabad.

380. Proposals were made for the construction of feeder roads in the Murshidabad district in view of the opening of the railway line from Ranaghat to Murshidabad.

Darjeeling.

381. Special work on the Tista Valley road was necessary in connection with the Sikkim-Tibet Mission and included the project for the construction of a new high-level road.

The most important works in progress or completed during the year were as follows:—

		Rs.
(1)	Survey of a new alignment of the Tista Valley road, 13th to 24th mile	29,000
(2)	Permanent repairs to the upper section, Tista Valley road	88,750
(3)	Temporary repairs to the Tista Valley road from Sevoke to Riang	30,000
(4)	Special repairs, Darjeeling Hill Cart road, 1902-1903 ...	71,000
(5)	Ditto ditto 1903-1904, 23rd to 30th mile	26,166
(6)	High-level Tista Valley road. Estimate not prepared in the year under review.	

The survey of the new alignment of the Tista Valley road was completed up to 21st mile. The permanent repairs to the upper section of the Tista Valley road were completed. Items 3 and 4 were completed during the year. Three-fourths of the special repairs to the Darjeeling Hill Cart road sanctioned during 1903-1904 were done during the year. The earthwork on miles 13 to 21 of the High-level Tista Valley road was about seven-eighths done.

An estimate amounting to Rs. 1,16,470 for constructing a cart road from Rangpo Junction to Gangtok was also sanctioned, and Rs. 75,377 allotted for expenditure during the year.

Sikkim.

382. To complete the Military transport stages on the Tista Valley trade route estimates aggregating Rs. 27,682 were sanctioned for the construction of certain bridges and bungalows in Sikkim, and a sum of Rs. 21,695 was allotted for expenditure on the work during the year.

Of the two alternative routes (*a*) from Siliguri to Jelap La, *viâ* Tista bridge, Rangpo, Pakyong and Rongli, and (*b*) from Siliguri to Jelap La *viâ* Tista bridge, Kalimpong, Argarha Labha, Pangola and Lingtu, available for the transit of the Tibet Mission and for the development of trade with Tibet and more free access to the Chumbi Valley and Phari, the Government of India approved of the repairs of the first route, which was open, at an expenditure of Rs. 10,000, but deferred passing final orders on the second route.

On a representation by this Government of the needs of the Tibet Mission Transport authorities, the Government of India made a special grant of one lakh of rupees to Provincial revenues for repairs to the Tista Valley road from Siliguri to the Sikkim boundary.

The Government of India also sanctioned an additional grant of Rs. 75,000 to complete all the roads in Sikkim that were in progress from the previous year and for which the Political Officer, Sikkim, had asked for an additional grant of Rs. 90,000.

To open out a route into Sikkim, the line from Labha *viâ* Richila to Lingtu was ordered to be laid out and surveyed.

Jalpaiguri.

83. The most important works in progress or completed during the year were as follows:—

		Rs.
(1)	Ramshaihat-Gairkata road	67,691
(2)	Gairkata-Birpara road	40,403
(3)	Jainti-Rydak road	69,508
(4)	Rajabhatkhowa-Jaigaon road	55,038
(5)	Banarhat-Chamurchi road	21,314
(6)	Gairkata-Dhupguri road. Estimate not completed in the year under review.	

Of the Duars roads those from Gairkata to Birpara and from Banarhat to Chamurchi were finally completed, and that from Ramshaihat to Gairkata completed with the exception of repairs to damages. The progress on the Jainti-Rydak and Rajabhatkhowa-Jaigaon roads was not so satisfactory, but with the arrangements now made these two roads should be completed during the year 1904-1905. Work was commenced on the Gairkata-Dhupguri road and about two miles of earthwork completed.

384. In the Rangpur district approval was accorded to the estimate amounting to Rs. 27,930 for constructing a feeder road from Sonatola station, on the Brahmaputra-Sultanpur Branch Railway, to Jummerbari Bunder, and sanction was also accorded to the estimate amounting to Rs. 78,800 for constructing a feeder road from Paglapir to Saidpur Railway Station, a sum of Rs. 47,000 being contributed by Government to the District Board as a grant-in-aid for this work. Rangpur.

385. The Mahalsary road was opened out and widened and raised throughout. Materials for erecting bridges over several gaps were collected. The Chandraghona to Banderban road was widened and raised, and new alignments were opened out, the old line having been abandoned owing to its being very circuitous. The Banderban-Shuvalong Dâk road has been almost completed. Chittagong Hill Tracts.

386. In connection with the experimental farming and research work on the Pusa estate, the improvement of the Waini-Pusa road, which will form the main line of communication between Waini Station on the Bengal and North-Western Railway and the new Agricultural College, was found to be necessary; an estimate amounting to Rs. 31,169 was sanctioned for a road diversion and a screw-pile bridge on this road at Tara-Gopalpur Ghat towards the cost of which Government made a grant of Rs. 10,000 to the District Board during the year, and a project for the further improvement of the road is under preparation. Darbhanga.

387. Four feeder roads to the South Bihar Railway were under construction in the Monghyr district. The Monghyr District Board will contribute one-third of the cost of the work. Monghyr.

388. Various additions and repairs to roads were undertaken during the year. The reconstruction of the Harbhanga Inspection bungalow on the Cuttack-Sonepur road was completed, while that of the one at Basudevpalli on the same road was in progress. Cuttack and Angul.

389. The survey commenced last year, with a view to opening out the south-western part of the Ranchi district and the adjoining Native State of Gangpur, by constructing a feeder road to the Bengal-Nagpur Railway from Pâlkote to Kolinga station was completed, and the necessary plans and estimates have been prepared for sanction. Raising, embanking and metalling nine miles of the Ranchi-Chaibassa road between Chakradharpur and Deogan was almost completed. The collection of materials for a dâk bungalow at Bankura was commenced. Ranchi.

Miscellaneous Public Improvements.

390. Land was acquired at a cost of Rs. 20,323 for a Branch Shipping Office at Kidderpore, and the new building was almost completed during the year under review.

Various works were undertaken for the improvement of the Calcutta maidan.

Measures were adopted, as in previous years, for the protection of the Nawab's palace at Murshidabad against the encroachment of the Bhagirathi river. The sloping bank was faced, for an area of 1,000 feet × 15 feet, with Nalhati stone boulders; the church ghât, which was damaged by the flood of previous years, was reconstructed; and some other minor accessory works were carried out.

A number of bricks were burnt for the proposed Agricultural College at Pusa. The plans and estimates of the proposed buildings were under the consideration of the Government of India.

Establishment.

391. Public Works Circles in Bengal were rearranged with effect from the 1st January 1904 by the abolition of the Burdwan Circle.

Railways and Tramways.

Lines under the Government of India.

392. As stated in previous reports Railways are classed under two heads, viz., Inter-Provincial and Provincial. The former class includes the great Trunk lines which connect Bengal with other Provinces, and the latter those lines which lie wholly within the limits of the Province. The Inter-Provincial Railways are all administered by the Government of India, likewise the Provincial Railways on the standard and metre gauges (except the Deoghur line) and the 2′ 6″ gauge lines which form part of the Eastern Bengal State Railway System.

Standard Gauge Railways.

393. During the year under review the following additions were made within the Province to the *Standard Gauge* Railways:—

			Miles.
The East Indian Railway ...	...	...	11·69
The Eastern Bengal State Railway	...	...	1·66
The Bengal-Nagpur Railway ...	...	...	142·96
	Total	...	156·31

The construction of the railway from Ranaghat to Murshidabad was taken in hand by the Eastern Bengal State Railway during the year.

The Board of Directors of the East Indian Railway approved of the projected line from Bhagalpur station to Bausi, a distance of 31⅛ miles, and consented to their Agent applying to the Government of India for authority to commence the work as soon as funds are available. The Secretary of State for India sanctioned the construction of a chord line of railway between Ondal station on the main line of the East Indian Railway and Sainthia station on the loop line, passing through the town of Suri. On the southern part of this project work was commenced towards the close of the year.

Surveys.

394. A survey for a line of railway from Bharharwa, a station on the East Indian Railway loop line, *viâ* Azimganj to Katwa, a distance of about 94 miles, was sanctioned by the Government of India. A survey for a line of railway from Sara to Serajganj, a distance of about 50 miles, was sanctioned, to be carried out by the agency of the Eastern Bengal State Railway.

The following surveys were completed:—

(1) A short branch from Ultadingi, about a mile from Sealdah, to Pattipukur and to the Arathoon jute mills, 1·75 miles; (2) a link to connect the Murshidabad branch with the Azimganj branch of the East Indian Railway together with a bridge over the Bhagirathi, 5·82 miles; and (3) a bridge over the Ganges from Damukdia to Sara.

Metre Gauge Railways.

395. The following additions were made to the *Metre Gauge* Railways in this Province during the year:—

		Miles.
The Assam-Bengal Railway		34·90
The Bengal-Duars		38·60
	Total	73·50

The Secretary of State sanctioned an estimate, amounting to Rs. 50,01,439, for the construction, by the Bengal and North-Western Railway Company, of a railway from Mansi to Baptiahi, with a branch from Sihursa to Murliganj, a total distance of 78·62 miles, as an integral part of the Tirhut State Railway.

Proposals were received for the construction of a line from Mymensingh *viâ* Netrokona to Bara Ari with a branch to Gauripur.

The following surveys were in progress:—

(1) From Katihar to Godagari, 105 miles; and (2) Raiganj to Malda 42 miles.

Railways administered by the Government of Bengal.

396. The railways in Bengal administered by the Local Government were:—

		Miles.
(1) The Darjeeling-Himalayan Railway	...	51
(2) The Deoghur Railway ...	...	4·79
(3) The Tarkeshwar-Magra Light Railway	...	31·12
(4) The Howrah-Amta " ...	...	28·69
(5) The Howrah-Sheakhala " ...	...	19·75
(6) The Bukhtiarpore-Bihar " ...	...	18·50
(7) The Ranaghat-Krishnagar " ...	...	20·25
Total	...	174·10

The mileage added during the year was as follows:—

The Bukhtiarpore-Bihar Light Railway	...	18·50
The Tarkeshwar-Magra (Tribeni extension)	...	2·15
Total	...	20·65

The Bukhtiarpore-Bihar Light Railway was opened to traffic on the 1st of July 1903, and the Tribeni extension of the Tarkeshwar-Magra light railway, which was sanctioned during the preceding year, was completed when the year closed. The extension of the Howrah-Amta Light Railway from Jagatbullabpore to Champadanga, with a branch to Rajbulhat, in all 21 miles, was in progress during the year.

The construction of a light railway, 26 miles in length, on the 2′ 6″ gauge between Baraset and the town of Basirhat in the district of the 24-Parganas was sanctioned during the year. Work was in progress throughout the year.

The question of constructing a light railway from Purulia to Ranchi and of the agency to be employed was under the consideration of the Government.

Proposals were received for the construction of a line from Singhjani *viâ* Sherpur to Nalitabari. The Local Government also had under consideration a proposed light railway from Krishnagar to Meherpore with a probable prolongation to the trade centres of Karimpore and Jellinghi. An application from Messrs. McLeod & Co. for a concession to construct a light railway from the steamer ghat near Sirajganj to Ullapara in the district of Pabna was also under consideration.

Darjeeling-Himalayan Railway.—The total gross earnings during the year amounted to Rs. 9,61,662 and the working expenses to Rs. 5,44,814. The increase in gross earnings over the previous year was Rs. 1,11,382, due as in the previous year mainly to an increase in goods traffic. There was an increase in working expenses of Rs. 72,390 over the previous year. The percentage of net earnings on capital outlay was 11·54, against 11·04 in the previous year.

Deoghur Railway.—There was an increase both in passenger and goods traffic as compared with the previous year. The percentage of net earnings on capital outlay was 4, against 2·5 in the previous year.

Tarkeshwar-Magra Light Railway.—The passenger traffic was the same as in the previous year, but in the goods traffic there was an increase. The percentage of net earnings on capital outlay was 2·50, against 2·54 in the previous year.

Howrah-Amta Light Railway.—The passenger and goods traffic showed an increase as compared with the totals of last year. The net earnings was 10·69 per cent. on the capital outlay and slightly in excess of the last year, which was 10·49 per cent.

Howrah-Sheakhala Light Railway.—There was an increase in passenger and goods traffic and in the net earnings which amounted to 5·68, as against 5·20 per cent in the previous year.

Bukhtiarpore-Bihar Light Railway—The year's working showed a net profit of 2·16 per cent. on the capital outlay.

Ranaghat-Krishnagar Light Railway.—There was an increase in passenger traffic and a great increase in goods traffic. The net earnings also rose from 2·84 per cent. to 4·55 per cent. on the capital outlay.

The terms for the purchase of this railway by the Government of India were almost completed when the year closed.

Important matters under discussion.

397. The Government of Bengal communicated to the Government of India its views on the following questions:—

(1) The span and headway to be allowed for the passage of steamers at the bridges over the Choorni and Jellinghi rivers on the Murshidabad Branch of the Eastern Bengal State Railway.

(2) The extension of the Murshidabad branch of the Eastern Bengal State Railway *viâ* Bhagwangola to Lalgola, with a ghat station on the river bank.

(3) Whether the bridges to be built over the Choorni, Jellinghi and the Pagla Chundi Daha on the Murshidabad branch of the Eastern Bengal State Railway should be adapted for the passage of cart traffic.

(4) The renewal of the contract for the working of the Tirhut State Railway by the agency of the Bengal and North-Western Railway Company.

(5) A project for linking up the Murshidabad branch of the Eastern Bengal State Railway with the Nalhati-Azimganj branch of the East Indian Railway, involving the construction of a bridge over the Bhagirathi river near Azimganj.

(6) Whether the proposed railway bridge near Azimganj should have a roadway adapted for cart traffic.

(7) Whether Government should exercise the option of taking over the Darjeeling Himalayan Railway after the lapse of 25 years from the date of opening.

As a result of the floods during 1902 the question of providing sufficient waterway on the Bairagnia and Khanwaghat sections of the Tirhut State Railway was carefully considered, and the Railway authorities have adopted measures to ensure protection to the local areas.

Moharbhanj State Railway.

398. The construction of a light railway on a 2′ 6″ gauge, connecting Baripada, the head-quarters of the Moharbhanj State (one of the Tributary Mahals of Orissa), with the Baripada road station of the Bengal-Nagpur Railway, a distance of 32 miles, was almost completed by the agency of that State at the close of the year.

Canals.

(Administration Report of Irrigation Works for the year 1903-1904.)

399. The transactions of the Irrigation Department for the year 1903-1904 are exhibited in the following statements, so far as they relate to works of Irrigation and Navigation:—

Capital Account.

Heads.	Amount of construction estimate.	Expenditure during 1903-04.	Expenditure to end of 1903-04.	Balance for expenditure from 1st April 1904.
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
Protective Irrigation Works—				
Direct charges ...	43,45,795	3,26,749	11,37,221	32,08,574
Indirect do.	1,22,751	9,344	27,018	95,733
Total ...	44,68,546	3,36,093	11,64,239	33,04,307
Major Irrigation Works—				
Direct charges ...	6,26,94,524	23,545	6,26,20,985	73,539
Indirect do.	17,61,864	892	17,57,798	4,066
Total ...	6,44,56,388	24,437	6,43,78,783	77,605
Minor Works and Navigation—				
Direct charges	1,34,91,432	5,25,897	1,33,14,420	1,77,012
Indirect do.	3,30,319	11,376	3,45,204	(−)14,885
Total ...	1,38,21,751	5,37,273	1,36,59,624	1,62,127

Revenue Account.

Heads.	Receipts.	Working Expenses.		Total working expenses.	Net Revenue.
		Direct charges.	Indirect charges.		
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
Major Irrigation Works ...	20,14,647	10,10,799	84,916	10,95,715	9,18,932
Minor Works and Navigation	5,54,943	4,86,615	13,572	5,00,187	54.756

The classification of the works dealt with in this chapter is described in the Report for 1901-1902.

ORISSA CIRCLE.

Major Irrigation Works.

400. The Balasore Division was transferred to this circle from the South-Western Circle with effect from the 1st December 1903. The Provincial works in Angul were formed into a subdivisional charge, under the Akhayapada-Jajpur Division. Administrative changes.

401. The expenditure (direct charges) charged to the Capital account of the Orissa Canals during the year was Rs. 40,754. The total Capital outlay for direct charges to the end of the year stands at Rs. 2,59,71,405. Capital Account.

402. During the year the following works were in progress:—

The construction of the Dudhai Canal was approaching completion. Thorough repairs to the Superintending Engineer's residence and the construction of a new office for the Superintending Engineer were completed.

On the Machgong Canal the extension of the Distributaries, which were in progress from last year, were completed. A minor distributary was constructed from No. 8 Distributary, and the construction of a sub-distributary from 43 chains of 10K was in progress.

The construction of a masonry bridge over the Thailo-Majikura drainage cut was commenced. Little progress was made with the construction of Galepur, Garadpur and Navarangpur minor distributaries, from the High Level Canal, Range III. The construction of a new inspection bungalow at Jagatpur at the head of the Kendrapara Canal was in progress. Eighty permanent outlets were constructed during the year.

403. The lengths of canals and distributaries which were in operation during the year were:—Canals for irrigation and navigation, 204¾ miles; canals for irrigation only, 96 miles; distributaries and minor channels, 1,166 miles, 21¼ miles being added during the year. Lengths of Canals, &c.

In addition to the total length of canal shown above, the Hijili Tidal Canal, 29 miles, and the Orissa Coast Canal, 129¾ miles, total 158¾ miles, were in operation during the year. These are used for navigation only.

404. The rainfall was well distributed and sufficient for agricultural purposes, which accounts for the non-renewal of the lapsed leases. The average rainfall at the thirteen recording stations outside the Balasore Division was 59·99 against 65·24 inches in the previous year. Irrigation.

The area irrigated was 210,161 acres, against 224,998 acres in the preceding year. There was a reduction in the *kharif* area on all the canals, except the High Level Canal, Range III, on which there was an increase of 319 acres. The decrease was largest on the Kendrapara Canal extension and amounted to 8,218 acres. The High Level Canal followed next, with a reduction of 6,135 acres. The reduction on the other canals was small. The cash realisations on account of water-rates amounted to Rs. 3,26,484 against the demand of Rs. 3,30,509. The balance at the end of the year was Rs. 4,025 against Rs. 1,663 outstanding at the end of 1902-1903.

405. The Navigation receipts, excluding those from the Hijili Tidal and Orissa Coast Canals, which are treated separately, were Rs. 70,336 against Rs. 68,617 in 1902-1903. The traffic has increased, but owing to the reduction of tollage rates the actual earnings were not greater. Navigation receipts.

Financial results.

406. The revenue and working expenses, (direct and indirect) of the Canals during the year were Rs. 4,27,983 and Rs. 3,82,673, respectively, the result being a net revenue of Rs. 45,310 against Rs. 14,644 in the preceding year.

Hijili Tidal Canal.

407. There was no outlay on the Capital account during the year, which now stands at Rs. 25,51,641 (direct charges). An estimate, amounting to Rs. 13,297, was sanctioned in March 1904 to clear the supply channel at Gewankhali, which has silted up in some places to a height of 6 feet above its original bed level. The work is in progress. The Navigation receipts were Rs. 40,913 against Rs. 39,460 in the preceding year. The total receipts and working expenses (direct and indirect) were Rs. 42,334 and Rs. 24,932, respectively, against Rs. 41,050 and Rs. 36,265, respectively, for the preceding year. The result was a net revenue of Rs. 17,402 against Rs. 4,785 in 1902-1903.

Minor Works and Navigation.

Orissa Coast Canal.

408. There was no outlay on the Capital account during the year. The total Capital outlay (direct charges) amounts to Rs. 43,72,764. The whole length of the canal remained open throughout the year, except Range IV(B) which was closed from 1st November 1903 to 15th January 1904. The navigation receipts were Rs. 30,060 against Rs. 30,677 in the preceding year. The tollage rates were reduced during the last three months of the year under review. The receipts and working expenses (direct and indirect) were Rs. 34,378 and Rs. 66,131, respectively, resulting in a deficit of Rs. 31,753 against a deficit of Rs. 11,499 in the preceding year.

General.

409. Nineteen cases were instituted by the Executive Engineer, Balasore Division, during the year for constructing bunds within the prohibited area, and 50 persons were sent up for trial. Convictions were obtained in 17 cases and 35 persons were convicted.

There were no high floods in the Mahanadi, Brahmini and Byturni rivers. There were three ordinary floods in the Subarnarekha, two in the Barabalang, and very low floods in the rivers crossed by the Hijili Tidal Canal. No cyclonic storm of any importance occurred during the year. There was a short, though sharp, shock of earthquake on the 29th March 1904, but no serious damage was done.

SOUTH-WESTERN CIRCLE.

Major Irrigation Works.

Midnapore Canal.

Capital account.

410. The work of constructing permanent outlets on distributaries in No. 4 Subdivision was completed with an expenditure of Rs. 3,529, against the estimate of Rs. 5,682. An estimate for 24 more outlets, amounting to Rs. 3,332, was sanctioned late in the year and the work was started. The capital outlay during the year amounted to Rs. 951. The total capital expenditure (direct charges) now stands at Rs. 82,93,548.

Lengths of Canals, &c.

411. The lengths of Main Canal, distributaries and village channels remain the same as last year, viz., Main Canal and branches, 72 miles, distributaries, 267·22 miles, and village channels, 29·95 miles. The apparent decrease of 16¾ miles in the distributaries is due to a mistake in last year's figure.

Floods.

412. The highest flood of the year in the Cossye river occurred on the 8th October 1903, when the Midnapore gauge reached 86·60. The highest gauge-reading of the previous year was 87·90 on the 26th September 1902, and the highest on record 93·30 on the 19th June 1898.

Irrigation.

413. The total area irrigated by the Canal was 93,367 acres as compared with 87,464 acres in the previous year. The increase in the area irrigated was caused by partial failure of the rains, coupled with sufficient rainfall to assist the canals at critical periods. A scheme of distributing water under the "tatil" system throughout the season has been drawn up and will be introduced in 1904-1905. The cash realizations on account of water-rates amounted to Rs. 1,49,022 against the demand of Rs. 1,54,271. The amount remitted was Rs. 5,224, and the balance at the end of the year was Rs. 25.

414. The navigation receipts amounted to Rs. 47,153 against Rs. 70,471 in the preceding year. The continued falling off is due to the gradual diversion of canal traffic to the Bengal-Nagpur Railway. **Navigation receipts.**

415. The revenue and working expenses (direct and indirect) of the canal for the year 1903-1904 were Rs. 2,20,078 and Rs. 1,50,170, respectively, resulting in a net revenue of Rs. 69,908 against Rs. 71,226 in 1902-1903. Under "Extensions and Improvements" the principal works carried out were (1) Revenue Zilladar's record-room at Antra, (2) an escape on the 12th mile of Distributary No. 1, left bank, in No. 4 Subdivision, and (3) a revetment on the riverside slope of the canal terminus at Ulubaria. Under "Maintenance and Repairs" the chief item was the construction of iron record-racks in the Special Deputy Collector's office at Midnapore and a verandah on the east side of the building. **Financial results.**

MINOR WORKS AND NAVIGATION.

416. The capital outlay (direct charges) during the year was Rs. 5,24,589 and was incurred chiefly on the following works:— **Calcutta and Eastern Canals.**

(1) Improvement of the Madaripur Bhil route.
(2) Constructing a new canal from Dhappa to Bamonghatta.
(3) Surveying Tolly's Nala.
(4) Widening the roadway of Zeerut Bridge.

The total capital outlay amounts to Rs. 75,92,496.

The total expenditure on the Madaripur Bhil route up to the end of the year 1903-1904 was Rs. 6,40,940. As the construction of the new canal from Dhappa to Bamonghatta was abandoned, a revised estimate amounting to Rs. 49,256 for work actually done was sanctioned during the year. The expenditure up to the end of March was Rs. 34,686; the balance, consisting of land charges, remains to be adjusted. Surveying operations on Tolly's Nala were completed during the year at a cost of Rs. 4,097.

An estimate amounting to Rs. 54,000 was sanctioned for widening the existing Zeerut Bridge over Tolly's Nala. Messrs. Burn & Co. have been entrusted with the work. A sum of Rs. 25,000 was spent during the year.

Under maintenance the following expenditure was necessary:—

The cost of maintaining the Madaripur Bhil route, including dredging the Madhumati entrance, was Rs. 16,830.

The silt clearance of the Assasoonee khal which was taken in hand in 1902-1903 was completed at a cost of Rs. 19,752. An expenditure of Rs. 7,819 was incurred in dredging the shallow portion of the Bhangore khal.

The aggregate length of the channels open for navigation was 1,127 miles.

The navigation receipts amounted to Rs. 3,81,934 against Rs. 3,63,297 in the preceding year.

The receipts and working expenses (direct and indirect) were Rs. 3,98,170 and Rs. 2,68,288, respectively, resulting in a net revenue of Rs. 1,29,882 against Rs. 1,40,406 in the preceding year.

417. The approximate lengths of the channels comprised in the Nadia Rivers remained the same as last year. **Nadia Rivers.**

No Capital account is kept. The receipts and working expenses (direct and indirect) were Rs. 88,402 and Rs. 1,04,388. The net revenue was a deficit of Rs. 15,986 against a deficit of Rs. 29,308 in the preceding year.

A sum of Rs. 56,357 was spent during the year on the improvement of the navigable channels of the Ganges river.

418. The receipts and working expenses (direct and indirect) for the year 1903-1904 were Rs. 2,300 and Rs. 538, respectively, against Rs. 5,200 and Rs. 623 in the previous year. **Gaighatta and Baxi Khal.**

419. The total length of the Eden Canal is 45¼ miles. The receipts and working expenses were Rs. 30,832 and Rs. 43,804, respectively, against Rs. 24,497 and Rs. 39,678, respectively, in 1902-1903. The area irrigated during the year was 28,471 acres against 27,767 acres in the preceding year. The cash realizations on account of water-rates were Rs. 30,329 against the demand of Rs. 42,262; a sum of Rs. 3,567 was remitted, leaving a balance at the end of the year of Rs. 8,366. **Eden Canal.**

SONE CIRCLE.

Protective Work. Karmanassa Reservoir scheme.

420. A sum of Rs. 703 was expended during the year on the survey of the Karmanassa project for the protection of the Bhabua subdivision, in the Shahabad district, a tract of country which suffers very frequently from drought. A scheme is now under preparation, and it is expected that the plans and estimates will shortly be submitted to the Government of India.

Major Irrigation Works.

SONE CANALS.

Capital account.

421. The Capital account of the Sone Canals under head "49" is closed. The minus expenditure of Rs. 29,494 during the year represents the sale-proceeds of steam launches, punching machines and old shutters, etc. Under 43—Minor Works and Navigation the expenditure was Rs. 11,334 incurred on the purchase of a residence for the Executive Engineer, Eastern Sone Division, at Bankipur.

The total Capital outlay (direct charges) up to the end of 1903-1904 was Rs. 2,58,04,391.

Lengths of Canals, etc.

422. The lengths of canals and distributaries in operation at the close of the year were the same as in the previous year.

Rainfall.

423. The average rainfall registered at twelve stations was 33·15 inches as compared with an average of 35·24 inches in the previous year. In June and July there was very little rain; in fact the monsoon did not break till the beginning of August, so that ploughing and the sowing of seed-beds were much retarded on unleased areas and transplanting was carried on till late in September. Heavy rain fell during the *hathiya* and a good *kharif* crop was secured. The heavy rain in October affected the early demand for *rabi* irrigation, but the deficiency of the winter rainfall caused an increase in the leased area over that of the previous year.

Irrigation.

424 The area irrigated during the year under review was 505,803 acres against 483,567 acres in the previous year: of the total average 369,191 acres were under *kharif*, 110,451 acres under *rabi*, and 26,161 acres under hot-weather crops.

The area irrigated under long lease at the end of the year under review was 360,235 acres against 339,449 acres at the end of last year. The area which fell out of lease on the 31st March 1903 was 86,656 acres; almost the whole area has been renewed. The *kharif* irrigation increases steadily. The *rabi* irrigation, owing to the deficient winter rain, was also larger than in the previous year. A reduction of area in hot-weather irrigation was confined to the Arrah and Buxar Divisions, and is said to be owing to the failure of this crop in the previous year.

The cash realizations on account of water-rates amounted to Rs. 12,48,077 against the demand of Rs. 12,49,821. The remissions of the year amounted to Rs. 1,744; there was no balance outstanding at the end of the year.

The decrease in the revenue is mainly due to the very small area of *rabi* irrigation of 1902-1903 as compared with that irrigated in 1901-1902. The Deputy Collector and his staff maintain the good record of previous years, and it is satisfactory to note a reduction in the amount of remissions and the number of certificates issued.

Navigation Receipts.

425. The navigation receipts during the year were Rs. 22,708 against Rs. 18,587 in the previous year.

Financial Results.

426. The receipts and working expenses (direct and indirect) were Rs. 13,24,252 and Rs. 5,37,940, respectively, against Rs. 14,45,780 and Rs. 5,71,763 in the preceding year.

Closures of Canals.

427. The Main Western Canal and the Distributaries below the 12th mile, *i.e.*, below the offtake of the Buxar Canal, were closed during the hot weather, as the irrigation therefrom during that season is very small. Owing to a short supply in the Sone river, the Main Eastern Canal system had to be closed to navigation from about the 10th of May to 2nd June.

Silt clearances.

428. There has been a slight decrease of silt in the first two miles of the Main Eastern Canal, also in the 1st and 5th miles of the Main Western Canal. In the 2nd mile of the latter the quantity of silt remains stationary, whilst in

the 3rd and 4th miles a slight increase has taken place. No difficulties are experienced in running maximum discharges.

GANDAK CIRCLE.

Protective Works.

429. The works under this head are the Triberi and Dhaka Canals. The total expenditure during 1903-1904 was Rs. 3,26,749. The net expenditure in India amounted to Rs. 78,962 on the Dhaka Canal and to Rs. 2,47,417 on the Triberi Canal. A sum of Rs. 5,50,000 was originally allotted for expenditure during the year under report, but it was subsequently reduced to Rs. 3,50,000. . . Triberi and Dhaka Canals.

It will be seen that the modified grant of Rs. 3,49,465 was almost fully spent, but, comparing the expenditure with the original grant, the progress on the Triberi Canal was not satisfactory. The reasons assigned for the slow progress are: (1) local labour is not available near the canal, so that labour had to be imported from other districts; (2) the country along the foot of the hills, where the upper portion of the canal is situated, has a bad reputation for fever; and (3) the rates offered were insufficient to attract labour to the works.

The rates have been increased in the revised estimate of the project submitted to the Government of India for the sanction of the Secretary of State, and it is expected that there will now be satisfactory progress.

TRIBENI CANAL.

The foundations of the following masonry works were excavated:—

The Head sluice at Bhaisalotan and the superpassage in the 4th mile; aqueducts in the 6th, 9th and 17th miles; in the syphons under the Chota Bhubsa in the 12th mile, the Bura Bhubsa in the 14th mile, and the main syphon in the 35th mile; about 40 per cent. of the concrete in the foundations was completed.

The residence and office building for the Subdivisional Officer, the Cashier's quarters, and Sectional Officer's quarters at Ramnagar have been completed. The quarters for the Zilladar and Head Munshi were in progress.

The residence and office buildings for the Executive Engineer at Motihari were fully completed, and the expenditure incurred up to the end of March 1904 aggregated Rs. 38,872.

A portion of the earthwork in miles 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, and 23 of the Canal was done.

Survey and demarcation of the distributaries were in progress when the year closed.

DHAKA CANAL.

The works of the Dhaka Canal and its branches, viz., Seeraha and Patahi, were nearly completed during the year under report. Only one syphon at the 3rd mile of the main canal remains to be done.

The Lal Buckeya anicut was considerably damaged by the floods of 1902. The damage was made good, but the floods of 1903 again caused damage, which was only partly repaired, as it is intended to modify the design of the weir.

Earthwork in the Raghubpur and Harnaraina distributaries was in progress and materials for masonry works collected. Land has been demarcated for the Dhaka Seerowna and Harbolwa distributaries, and bricks were being carted to site.

MINOR WORKS AND NAVIGATION.

430. The only works under this head in this circle are the Saran Canals, 19 miles in length. Saran Canals.

The canals remained closed during the year under report, except for a day in August 1903, when they were opened for rice irrigation, on account of a failure of the rains in the early part of the *hathiya*. A sum of Rs. 4,636 (direct charges) was spent on the upkeep of the canals against Rs. 3,223 in the preceding year. The revenue derived from the canals amounted to Rs. 674.

There was one heavy flood in the Gandak river, on the 12th August 1903, when the gauge at Siswa head sluice read 242·40; the flood in 1883 recorded the same gauge reading.

Madhuban Canal.

431. The only work of this class in this circle is the Madhuban (Teur) Canal, which is 6¼ miles in length, and on which no water-rates are charged.

The area irrigated during the year under report was 1,044 acres against 2,058 acres in the preceding year, owing to the favourable rainfall. The area of poppy irrigation remained almost the same.

The canal was maintained in good order at a cost of Rs. 12,452 against Rs. 10,916 of the previous year. The revenue derived from the canal was Rs. 187 against Rs. 206 of the previous year.

Lakhowara Distributary.

432. The work on this distributary, which takes off from the Madhuban Canal at 1 mile 2,100 feet right, was nearly completed, with the exception of one Regulator and Bridge in the 3rd mile.

Village channels and permanent outlets will be taken up during the current year. Water-rates will be levied when the construction of the distributary is finally completed.

The total expenditure up to the end of March 1904 amounted to Rs. 14,168, out of which Rs. 7,877 were spent during the year under report.

Embankments and Drainage.

General.

433. The public embankments in Bengal are as described in paragraph 418 of the Report for 1902-1903. The only administrative change of import-ance occurring within the year was the transfer of the Balasore Division from the South-Western to the Orissa Circle, with effect from the 1st December 1903. With it were transferred to the Orissa Circle—

Class A.—Orissa embankments, aggregating 37 miles 320 feet in length, in the Balasore district.

Class B.—Schedule D embankments, aggregating 315 miles 1,793 feet in length, in the Midnapore district.

Class C.—Jokee takavi embankment, 6 miles 1,146 feet in length, in the Midnapore district.

The total length of embankments maintained during the year was 2,146 miles, protecting an area of 8,681,063 acres. The expenditure incurred on works and repairs on embankments and drainage works was Rs. 4,33,931. The most serious flood of the year was one in the river Gandak, which did considerable damage to crops and houses in the unprotected area of the district of Champaran.

The appointment of District Standing Committees for the development of the system of protective embankments in the districts of Cuttack, Puri and Balasore was approved by Government. During the year rules for the guidance of these Committees were issued by the Board of Revenue.

Original works and ordinary repairs.

434. The outlay of the year on original works amounted to Rs. 43,459. Of this sum, Rs. 13,658 were spent on the construction of a retired line in the sea-dyke near Chandpur. The expenditure on repairs aggregated Rs. 3,77,762, of which Rs. 2,85,941 were spent on embankments in class B. The expenditure during the year on repairs to the Orissa embankments was normal. The amount expended in the Balasore Division was Rs. 3,377. The total cost of repairs to the Schedule D Embankments (Class B) in the Midnapore district, lately transferred to the Orissa Circle, was Rs. 41,344, of which Rs. 36,358 were expended on maintenance. The maintenance charge was heavy, mainly due to the extensive repairs to the Hijili sea-dyke, on which Rs. 10,516 were expended. Heavy repairs were also done to the Kalinagar-Hasia and Jalpai Embankments at an aggregate cost of Rs. 14,805. There were no breaches in the embankments. In the South-Western Circle the outlay incurred during the year on the construction of retired lines was Rs. 66,120.

In the Burdwan, Hooghly and 24-Parganas districts, there was a reduction in expenditure of Rs. 18,382, while in the Murshidabad district the charge for maintenance was Rs. 6,274 in excess of the preceding year. The expenditure was mainly confined to the construction of retired lines at Majhampur, Mowla and Sujapur, in the 18th and 22nd to 24th miles of the Bhagirathi

Embankment (Schedule D, No. 94). In the Midnapore district the total outlay on the new retired line at Harisingpur, Chetua Circuit Embankment (Schedule D, No. 22), was Rs. 26,558 against the sanctioned estimate of Rs. 41,843. The outlay during the year was Rs. 21,637.

On (Class C) Takavi Embankments under contract in the Midnapore, Muzaffarpur, Saran and Champaran districts, a sum of Rs. 65,064 was expended during the year against the contract provision of Rs. 1,10,606. The outlay incurred on the maintenance of the Gandak Embankments was Rs. 37,769 against Rs. 19,053 in the preceding year. The excess was due chiefly to the raising of the Saran Embankments three feet above the highest flood level; to the closing of the breaches in Salimpur Charki; and the construction of a cross bund at Barwaz. The expenditure on repairs to the Midnapore Embankments was Rs. 27,295 against Rs. 26,899 in the previous year.

On (Class D) Takavi Embankments the total outlay incurred on repairs was Rs. 6,057.

In the South-Western Circle the expenditure on the maintenance of the Rajbundi bund, the Tolly's Nala and Madaria Khal Embankments was trifling and calls for no remark.

The breaches occurring during the year were unimportant, and the expenditure on their repair as compared with the previous year's figures small.

435. In the Orissa Circle the amount expended on constructing retired lines of embankments including slope-cutting amounted to Rs 11,699. In the South-Western Circle the cost of constructing retired lines in the Burdwan, Hooghly, Midnapore, Murshidabad, and the 24-Parganas districts was Rs. 66,120 against Rs. 77,407 in the previous year. In the Gandak, Northern and Bhagalpur Circles no retired lines were constructed during the year. Retired lines.

436. The actual outlay during the year on the Orissa Embankments (Class A) maintained as agricultural works, exclusive of charges for Establishment and Tools and Plant, was Rs. 35,437 against Rs. 41,409 in the previous year; the average rate per mile being Rs. 70. The expenditure on Class B Government embankments was Rs. 2,43,863 against Rs. 2,85,941 in the previous year; the average mileage rate being Rs. 224 against Rs. 269 in 1902-1903. Financial.

Government has contracted to maintain certain embankments on behalf of the persons benefited at a fixed annual charge in the districts of Saran, Champaran, Muzaffarpur, and Midnapore. The charges debited to these embankments were:—in Midnapore Rs. 11,41,754, Saran Rs. 7,49,814, Champaran Rs. 5,42,146 and Muzaffarpur Rs. 4,03,755. The total charges so debited were Rs. 28,37,469 as compared with the contract amount Rs. 22,97,952.

437. The Dankuni, Howrah, Rajapore and Burrajalla Drainage Works in the Hooghly district in charge of the Executive Engineer, Northern Drainage and Embankment Division, were maintained in good order during the year. The cost of their maintenance was Rs. 17,388. Works undertaken under the provisions of the Drainage Act, VI (B.C.) of 1880.

The sluices of the drainage schemes were used during the year both for irrigation and drainage purposes, and fairly good crops were obtained from the whole of the areas assessed.

438. There was no expenditure on original works during the year. The outlay incurred on maintenance and repairs of the works was small. On the Bullee bhil Rs. 3,926 were spent for repairing and maintaining the escape weirs, sluices, regulators, drainage channels, and dividing embankments. In the Balasore Division, the Baliaghai main and branch drains were kept open to traffic throughout the year. The outer bund of the Sarpai sluice channel was cut for drainage purposes at a cost of Rs. 928; and for silt clearance of the khas tahsil khals and the upper branch of the Sadar khal Rs. 9,357 were expended. The Talputty khal has been widened. Drainage works carried out at the cost of Government, but not under the provisions of the Drainage Act.

439. The chief amounts expended on original works were as follows:— Drainage works carried out under the provisions of the Embankment Act, II (B.C.) of 1882.

The Telipukar sluice in mile 14¼ of the Sundarbans Embankment (Schedule D, No. 80) which had been taken in hand in the previous year was completed at a total cost of Rs. 3,373. An embankment on the left bank of the Peali river, nearly seven miles in length with two sluices, was under construction. The amount expended on it during the year was Rs. 7,032 against the sanctioned estimate of Rs. 75,958. For clearing silt from the Kunjapur khal, in the Midnapore district, Rs. 3,654 were expended against the estimate of

Rs. 20,172. The funds for this work are provided by Government under the Agricultural Loans Act. On maintenance and repairs the following amounts were expended:—

The Churrial khal drainage sluice and 19 other sluices in the Schedule D Embankments in the 24-Parganas district were efficiently maintained during the year at an aggregate cost of Rs. 2,892.

An estimate amounting to Rs. 1,29,193 for the improvement of the drainage of lands in the Argowal Circuit Embankment (Schedule D, No. 47), in the Midnapore district, was sanctioned by Government in August 1903, and the plans and estimates have been sent to the Collector of Midnapore for disposal under the Embankment Act.

The Magra Hât Scheme, which has been designed for the improvement of the drainage of the central portion of the 24-Parganas district under the Sanitary Drainage Act, has been sent to the Municipal Department of this Government for consideration and for the issue of the necessary notification appointing Drainage Commissioners. The estimate for the scheme is under revision by the Superintending Engineer, South-Western Circle.

The preliminary procedure required for carrying out the scheme for draining the Chalan bhil in the districts of Rajshahi and Pabna under the Sanitary Drainage Act has been taken by the Municipal Department of this Government.

A revised scheme for improving the drainage of the country in the neighbourhood of Dum-Dum by means of the Bagjolla khal was prepared, which included the excavation of a new canal from Dhappa to Bamonghatta, as it was considered essential that this canal should form the outfall drainage channel of the whole of the tract comprised within the Bagjolla Scheme. An estimate for this canal amounting to Rs. 1,93,000 was sanctioned by Government in December 1902. The excavation of the canal has been kept in abeyance pending the decision of the question of compensation for fishery rights; and until this question is settled, further progress cannot be made with the drainage scheme.

The drainage of a tract of country between Magra Hât and Surjipur was obstructed after the rains owing to the silting up of the outfall khal of the Surjipur sluice in the 24-Parganas district, and there was serious destruction of crops. This khal was partly re-excavated during the year at a cost of Rs. 3,986, for which a special grant was made by Government.

CHAPTER V.—REVENUE AND FINANCE.

Gross Revenue.

440. The following statement shows the gross revenue (*i.e.*, the total of Imperial, Provincial, and Local Revenues) for 1903-1904 as compared with those of 1902-1903:—

(The figures are in thousands.)

	1902-1903.				1903-1904.			
	Imperial.	Provincial.	Local.	Total.	Imperial.	Provincial.	Local.	Total.
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
Principal Heads of Revenue—								
I.—Land Revenue	3,04,71	1,06,78	...	4,11,49	1,99,60	2,10,39	...	4,09,99
II.—Opium	5,57,71	...	...	5,57,71	7,09,81	...	...	7,09,81
III.—Salt	2,67,95	...	...	2,67,95	2,18,01	...	...	2,18,01
IV.—Stamps	48,93	1,46,78	...	1,95,71	4,959	1,48,77	...	1,98,36
V.—Excise	78,94	78,94	...	1,57,88	81,48	81,48	...	1,62,96
VI.—Provincial Rates	...	49,74	51,38	1,01,12	...	50,40	52,59	1,02,99
VII.—Customs	1,77,92	2,28	...	1,80,20	1,68,84	2,58	...	1,71,42
VIII.—Assessed Taxes	29,26	29,26	...	58,52	24,73	24,73	...	49,46
IX.—Forests	6,28	6,28	...	12,56	5,33	5,33	...	10,66
X.—Registration	8,45	8,45	...	16,90	8,33	8,33	...	16,66
Total ...	14,80,15	4,28,51	51,38	19,60,04	14,65,72	5,32,01	52,59	20,50,32
XII.—Interest	14,56	3,47	41	18,44	14,29	3,26	45	18,00
Post office, Telegraph, and Mint—								
XIII.—Post-office	...	...	9	9	...	...	10	10
Receipts by Civil Department—								
XVI.—Law and Justice—								
Courts of Law	...	8,11	...	8,11	...	8,08	...	8,08
Jails	...	12,08	..	12,08	...	14,15	...	14,15
XVII.—Police	...	2,16	9,88	12,04	...	1,84	10,66	12,50
XVIII.—Marine	...	12,74	...	12,74	...	13,48	...	13,48
XIX.—Education	...	7,09	79	7,88	...	7,09	81	7,90
XX.—Medical	...	2,24	51	2,75	...	2,30	66	2,96
XXI.—Scientific and other Minor Departments	...	2,65	26	2,91	...	2,46	33	2,79
Total ...	...	47,07	11,44	58,51	...	49,40	12,46	61,86
Miscellaneous—								
XXII.—Receipts in aid of Superannuation	1,64	91	...	2,55	1,88	87	...	2,75
XXIII.—Stationery and Printing ...	1,01	1,38	1	2,40	1,30	1,46	1	2,77
XXV.—Miscellaneous	48	9,75	2,17	12,40	54	11,34	1,97	13,85
Total* ...	3,13	12,04	2,18	17,35	3,72	13,67	1,98	19,37
State Railway gross receipts	2,93,08	...	...	2,93,08	3,26,57	...	...	3,26,57
Irrigation—								
XXIX.—Major works (direct receipts)	...	21,21	...	21,21	...	20,21	...	20,21
XXX.—Minor works and navigation								
By Public Works Department	...	5,49	...	5,49	...	5,75	...	5,75
By Civil Department ...	...	1,13	18	1,31	...	1,28	20	1,48
Total ...	...	27,83	18	28,01	...	27,24	20	27,44
Buildings and Roads—								
XXXI.—Military works	1	...	...	1	4	...	...	4
XXXII.—Civil Works—								
By Public Works Department	1	2,47	...	2,48	...	5,42	...	5,42
By Civil Department ...	...	2,53	6,18	8,71	...	2,50	6,22	8,72
Total ...	2	5,00	6,18	11,20	4	7,92	6,22	14,18
Contributions	...	63	19,90	20,53	...	66	19,87	20,53
GRAND TOTAL ...	17,90,94	5,24,55	91,76	24,07,25	18,10,34	6,34,16	93,87	25,38,37

The chief variations are explained in the sections on Imperial and Provincial Finance.

Imperial Revenue and Finance.

441. The following statement shows Imperial Receipts in 1903-1904 as compared with those of 1902-1903 :—

MAJOR HEADS.	1902-1903.	1903-1904.	DIFFERENCE.	
			More.	Less.
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
I.—Land Revenue	3,04,71,178	1,99,60,157	......	1,05,11,021
II.—Opium	5,57,70,823	7,09,80,798	1,52,09,975	......
III.—Salt	2,67,94,565	2,18,01,075	......	49,93,490
IV.—Stamps	48,92,610	49,58,879	66,269	......
V.—Excise	78,93,957	81,47,972	2,54,015	......
VII.—Customs	1,77,92,163	1,68,83,636	......	9,08,527
VIII.—Assessed Taxes	29,26,092	24,72,894	......	4,53,198
IX.—Forest	6,28,124	5,32,761	......	95,363
X.—Registration	8,45,383	8,33,226	......	12,157
XII.—Interest	14,55,725	14,29,040	......	26,685
XXII.—Receipts in aid of Superannuation	1,63,553	1,87,845	24,292	......
XXIII.—Stationery and Printing ...	1,01,074	1,29,690	28,616	......
XXV.—Miscellaneous	48,557	54,584	6,027	......
Total ...	14,97,83,804	14,83,72,557	1,55,89,194	1,70,00,441

The several increases and decreases shown in the above table are accounted for mainly by the causes given below:—*Opium*—Sale at a higher average price; *Stamps*—Increase in the number and value of civil and rent suits, as also in the number of cases under the Indian Succession Act specially in Patna; *Excise*—Favourable settlements of shop licenses and increased consumption of distillery liquors; *Superannuation*—Increase in the number of subscribers to the Indian Civil Service Family Pension Regulations and larger net receipts of the Orphangunge market at Kidderpore; *Stationery and Printing*—Larger sales of stationery to State Railways; *Land Revenue*—Larger transfers to Provincial Revenues for the cost of the proposed scheme for the structural improvement of Calcutta, for the loss due to the raising of the limit of exemption from income-tax and for writing off of the *Gekko* loan; *Salt*—Reduction in the rate of duty; *Customs*—Decline in import duty under Petroleum, Cotton manufactures and sugar (countervailing duties); *Assessed Taxes*—Raising the minimum income assessable to income-tax; *Forests*—Change in the method of working *sundri* areas in the Sunderbans Division necessitated by the exhaustion of the forests under the former method; *Registration*—Decrease in the number of registrations on account of good harvests and plague in certain districts; *Interest*—Reduction in the outstanding balance of the loans.

442. The following statement shows Imperial Expenditure in 1903-1904 as compared with 1902-1903 :—

MAJOR HEADS.	1902-1903.	1903-1904.	DIFFERENCE.	
			More.	Less.
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
1.—Refunds and Drawbacks	7,80,761	7,79,058	......	1,703
2.—Assignments and Compensations ...	1,23,892	1,14,762	......	9,130
3.—Land Revenue	7,06,989	8,04,613	97,624	......
4.—Opium	2,46,19,283	3,32,95,347	86,76,064	......
5.—Salt	3,06,995	3,07,295	300	......
6.—Stamps	1,82,229	1,85,000	2,771	......
7.—Excise	3,87,764	4,06,784	19,020	......
10.—Assessed Taxes	1,00,593	92,339	......	8,254
11.—Forests	3,19,007	3,51,573	32,566	......
12.—Registration	4,76,315	4,80,183	3,868	......
14.—Interest on other obligations	77,867	84,891	7,024	......
18.—General Administration	2,65,163	2,90,418	25,255	......
23.—Ecclesiastical	2,02,803	2,00,847	......	1,956
25.—Political...	60,856	27,478	......	33,378
26.—Scientific and other Minor Departments ...	82,512	28,518	......	53,994
27.—Territorial and Political Pensions ...	10,63,362	10,02,598	......	60,764
28.—Civil Furlough	590	141	......	449
29.—Superannuation	39,555	42,460	2,905	......
30.—Stationery and Printing	27,97,093	21,89,834	......	6,07,259
32.—Miscellaneous	46,665	45,019	......	1,646
45.—Civil Works	55,592	906	......	54,686
Total ...	3,26,95,886	4,07,30,064	88,67,397	8,33,219

The principal increases and decreases are explained mainly by the causes noted below :—*Land Revenue*—Larger outlay on Bihar Survey and Settlement operations; *Opium*—Larger payments to cultivators owing to larger outturn of crops; *Excise*—Grant of special allowance to Excise Deputy Collectors, revision of preventive establishments and enhanced activity on the part of inspecting and detective establishments which necessitated the grant of larger travelling allowance; *Forests*—Heavier charges for departmental timber and fuel woods and purchase of a forest house at Chittagong; *General Administrations*—Changes of officers and grant of privilege leave allowances to larger number of officers; *Assignments and Compensations*—Smaller payments of pensions in lieu of resumed lands; *Political*—There were special payments in 1902-1903; *Scientific and other Minor Departments*—Smaller outlay on Census operations; *Territorial and Political Pensions*—No special payment was made as was done in the previous year to the Nawab of Murshidabad for repairs to his buildings; *Stationery and Printing*—Smaller purchases of stationery for Central Stores; *Civil Works*—Special payment made to the Calcutta Corporation in the previous year for improvement of official and commercial centre of the town.

Land Revenue.

[Report on the Land Revenue Administration of the Lower Provinces for 1903-1904.]

443. During the year there were: (i) 176,304 permanently-settled estates, (ii) 10,499 temporarily-settled estates, and (iii) 3,266 estates held direct by Government, making a total of 190,069 as against 188,717 estates in the previous year. The number of estates in the three classes increased by 1,172, 58 and 122, respectively. Classification of estates.

444. The total current demand increased from Rs. 4,02,59,280 to Rs. 4,04,71,325. Decreases in the current demands from class I and class II were more than balanced by a large increase in the demand from class III. Total collections, arrear and current, amounted to Rs. 4,04,56,640, giving a percentage on total demand of 97·02. Remissions granted during the year amounted to Rs. 1,63,831. The total balance at the close of the year was Rs. 8,97,563, or 2·15 per cent. on the total demand. The total collections during the year, as also the percentages of the current collections on the current demand, and of the total collections on the total demand were better than in any of the preceding five years. Demand and collections.

Canal Revenue.

See under Chapter IV.—" Canals."

Sources of Revenue other than land.

CUSTOMS.

[Report on the Administration of the Customs Department in the Bengal Presidency for 1903-1904; Financial and Commercial Statistics of British India, Eleventh Issue, Section XXXIII, Merchandise Marks.]

445. No change was made in the past year in the incidence of taxation so far as ordinary import duties were concerned, but by a notification, dated the 2nd December 1903, the Government of India remitted in respect of any country, which was a party to the Brussels Convention, all countervailing duties on *sugar* produced after the 31st August 1903. Also under Act No. XI of 1903 and from the 1st April of that year, a cess of ¼ of a pie per pound was levied on all *tea* produced in India and exported from any customs port beyond the limits of British India. This cess brought in during the year a net sum of Rs. 2,15,870. Import and Export duties.

446. The gross revenue collected in the past year from customs duties was Rs. 3,62,34,853, or a decrease of 13·3 per cent. If to this be added the revenue collected on *salt* imported into Calcutta, but paid into district treasuries for clearance of salt from inland bonded warehouses, and which amounted in the past year to Rs. 26,35,505, the gross revenue amounts to Rs. 3,88,70,358, or a decrease on the whole of 13·3 per cent. After deduction of refunds and drawbacks, the net revenue that remained was Rs. 3,82,18,192, or 13·8 per cent., Revenue from Customs.

less than in the previous year. The decrease is mainly due to the reduction in salt duty from Rs. 2-8 to Rs. 2 per Indian maund: on general merchandise the revenue fell by 6·4 per cent., the total gross collections having been Rs. 5,88,70,358. The reduction in salt duty represented a loss of Rs. 55,86,808, but owing to the larger consumption (an increase of 2,59,332 maunds), the actual loss was only Rs. 50,68,144.

There was a decrease in the revenue from *salt* of Rs. 49,38,478 (inclusive of inland warehouse payments): also, owing to the keen competition of *Burma oil*, the revenue from *mineral oils* contracted by Rs. 6,61,279. The countervailing duties on *sugar* have dropped in the past year to only Rs. 36,753. *Liquors*, *woollen goods* and "other" articles all exhibit better collections in the past year; but owing to smaller imports of *silver*, *metals* fell off slightly in revenue, and the duty on *cotton goods* was adversely affected by the higher price of the raw material. Excise duty on local *cotton manufactures* rose again from Rs. 6,605 to Rs. 10,907-14, or by 65·1 per cent. It is stated this is probably due to mills finding it more profitable to weave, there being always a demand for *cotton listing* and *banding*. Refunds and drawbacks increased again in the past year and by 27·1 per cent., the revenue repaid being Rs. 6,52,166 as compared with Rs. 5,12,895. Drawbacks showed but little variation on the previous year, and the total was only Rs. 29,775, but refunds included Rs. 1,39,613 on *arms*, or 24·5 per cent. more than in the previous year, and on *sugar* the payments were Rs. 2,24,960, or an advance of Rs. 54·3 per cent. For *salt*, refunds rose to Rs. 1,63,280, or by 29·4 per cent. *Arms*, *sugar* and *salt* represent 80·9 per cent. of the total payments made.

Income of the Custom House, Calcutta.

447. The net income of the Custom House amounted to Rs. 3,51,17,467 against Rs. 4,08,94,366, representing a decrease of Rs. 57,76,899, equivalent to 14·1 per cent., the decrease being mainly due to the decline in collections derived from duty on salt and on imported goods. If, however, Rs. 26,35,505, paid into the district treasuries on account of *salt* transferred from bond at Calcutta to the inland bonded ware houses, be added to this, the net income becomes Rs. 3,77,52,972 as compared with Rs. 4,39,06,951, representing a decrease of 14· per cent.

Income of the subordinate ports in Bengal.

448. Deducting the total disbursements of Rs. 80,436 from the aggregate receipts at the subordinate ports, which amounted to Rs. 21,56,578 in 1903-1904, there was a net income of Rs. 20,76,142. The revenue was smaller by Rs. 2,40,324, or 10 per cent., principally in *salt* duty, as compared with the previous year's figures.

Cases under the Sea Customs Act.

449. Two hundred and fourteen cases were adjudged during the year as compared with 387 in the previous year. The extra duty realized amounted to Rs. 7,555-2 as against Rs. 5,174-1 in 1902-1903. The average per case was Rs. 35-4-10 as compared with Rs. 13-3 for the preceding year. The aggregate of the penalties realized was Rs. 26,518-2-10, a large increase over the Rs. 3,785-5 of 1902-1903 Most of the cases were misdeclarations, etc., detected by the Appraisers and Preventive Officers. The offences fell as usual chiefly under section 32, and were in the main due to omissions and inaccuracies in the preparation of bills-of-entry. There was, however, one case of deliberate fraud brought to light during the year, the result of which was that a careful scrutiny was made and two further cases discovered. The decisions in these three cases caused severer penalties than usual to be inflicted, and the total penalties have therefore increased as stated above.

Cases under the Indian Merchandise Marks Act.

450. There were 325 cases under the Act as compared with 351 in the previous year, viz., 115 under clause (*d*), 73 under clause (*e*), and 137 under clause (*f*). All were disposed of by the Collector of Customs, the total penalties inflicted amounting to Rs. 4,321-6-8 as compared with Rs. 3,513 in the previous year.

Changes in Procedure.

451. Further changes have been introduced during the year to complete the proposals of the Commission that sat in November and December 1902. Their recommendations have now with slight exceptions been carried into effect and have been found to work well.

Miscellaneous.

452. There was an increase of 10,432 in the number of Customs documents dealt with in 1903-1904 compared with the previous year. Import bills-of-entry increased from 108,554 to 113,487; export shipping bills from 81,908 to 87,729, while warehousing and clearance passes for bonded goods and *salt*

declined from 15,441 to 15,137. The amount of stamp duty levied again declined, from Rs. 21,901-5 in 1903-1902 to Rs. 19,256-3.

OPIUM.

[Report on the Administration of the Opium Department for the year 1902-1903 ; * Financial and Commercial Statistics of British India, Eleventh Issue ; Section IV.]

Character of the Season.

453. In both Agencies the season was, on the whole, an exceptionally good one. As compared with the averages for the preceding seven years, the average outturn per bigha showed an increase of 15 chitaks in the Bihar Agency and of 1 seer 12 chitaks in Benares. There was a further large increase in the amount of money advanced in both Agencies for the construction and repair of wells ; the figures for the Benares Agency exceeding all previous records, including even those of the famine year of 1896-97. The Board of Revenue have been requested to consider whether rules on the subject of these advances, similar to those which have produced such excellent results in Benares, could not be introduced in certain of the sub-agencies in Bihar, where the system is not yet popular.

Cultivation.

454. In the Bihar Agency the total area settled was 346,956 bighas and in the Benares Agency 624,562 bighas. In the Bihar Agency, there was a further diminution of the area which the raiyats engaged to cultivate. This decrease was general in all the sub agencies, except Tirhut, and is generally ascribed to the competition of more lucrative crops. It was noted last year that the decrease in the area settled in the Benares Agency in the year 1900-1901 had been, to some extent, made good. In the year under review, however, there was a further decline under this head, owing chiefly to the relinquishment of cultivation of doubtful character in the Sitapur Division.

It is satisfactory to notice that the desirability of securing the personal attendance of cultivators at settlement time was steadily kept in view both by the Agents and the Board. Progress, however, is slow in the Bihar Agency, where the great majority of the raiyats still prefer to take their advances through the *khatadars*, or middlemen.

Check measurements.

455. The improvement in check-measurements in the Bihar Agency, which was observed last year, was maintained ; and there was an increase in the percentage of the area so measured to the total cultivated area. In the Benares Agency, although results were not quite so good as in the previous year, owing to the employment of a smaller number of officers on the work, the percentage of the area test-measured was still considerably higher than in the Bihar Agency. The Board's report shows that this subject continues to receive the careful attention which it deserves.

Consistence and cost price of the drug.

456. The average consistence of the opium received at the Patna and Ghazipur Factories was 73·80° and 70·72° as against 75·08° and 71·75°, respectively, in the previous year. The low consistence did not, however, interfere with the process of manufacture. Owing to the unusually large outturn of the drug during the year under review, the expenditure shewed an increase of over 20½ lakhs in Bihar and of over 58 lakhs in Benares. For the same reason the average cost price of opium per maund in both the Agencies was much less than in the preceding year.

Outturn and Sales.

457. During the twelve months from November 1902 to October 1903 48,000 chests of provision opium were sold in equal proportions from the two Agencies. As compared with the results of the preceding 12 months, the average sale prices of Bihar and Benares opium shewed an increase of Rs. 100 and Rs. 104, respectively, per chest, owing chiefly to the rise in the exchange value of silver and to an increased demand for Bengal opium in China, Saigon, Batavia, Bangkok, Manilla and Formosa. The total outturn of provision opium during the year 1902-1903 was 64,739 chests. It is expected that there will be a reserve of 31,764 chests on the 1st January 1905.

Administrative Changes.

458. During the year under review, several administrative changes were introduced in the Opium Department. The most important of these was the

* For the year 1st November 1902—31st October 1903.

abolition, in the Benares Agency, of the system of remunerating the *lambardars*, or middlemen, by the primitive system known as *khurchan* (scrapings), and the introduction, in its place, of a method of payment by a commission of 2½ per cent. on the value of the opium received from the cultivators. In future the two appointments of Factory Superintendent at Ghazipur and Patna, which have hitherto been reserved solely for officers of the Indian Medical Service, will be open to, and will ordinarily be held by, qualified officers of the Opium Department. Also, the prospects of the Assistant Factory Superintendents and of the Factory Assistants have been improved. Finally, a concession has been made in favour of Sub-Deputy Opium Agents. Under the orders previously existing, a Sub-Deputy Opium Agent could not be promoted to the grade of Rs. 700 until he had completed 24 years' approved service in the Department, even if there was a vacancy in that grade. It has now been decided that promotions to that grade may be permitted whenever vacancies occur, even if the officers concerned have not completed 24 years' service, provided that they are otherwise eligible.

SALT.

[Report on the Administration of the Salt Department for 1903-1904; Financial and Commercial Statistics of British India, Eleventh Issue; Section III.]

Amendment of the Salt Law.

459. The draft Bill to amend the Bengal Salt Act VII (B.C.) of 1864 was introduced into the Bengal Council on the 23rd April 1898, but it was held in abeyance under the orders of Government in 1900, to the effect that work should be continued on the present lines for some time to come before proceeding with the Bill. The question of fresh legislation was, however, revived during the year. An enquiry was made by Government whether, in view of the experience acquired since 1900, the Salt Bill should be proceeded with, and if so, with what changes or modifications in the provisions originally drafted. A report on the subject was submitted by the Board of Revenue and is under consideration.

Administration.

460. There was no change in the charges in the districts of Cuttack, Balasore, Puri, Midnapore, Howrah, the 24-Parganas, Khulna and Chittagong, in which preventive operations were carried on, the limits of circles, ranges and parties remaining the same as in the previous year.

A scheme for the reorganization of the Salt Department has lately been sanctioned by the Secretary of State.

Stocks and issues of salt.

461. At the commencement of the year the stocks of salt in all *golas*, both public and private, 27,53,786 maunds, were over 8½ lakhs of maunds, less than on the 1st April 1902, but there was an increase in the quantity of salt imported during the year under report, (1,11,72,874 maunds) of over 5½ lakhs of maunds. The clearances, 1,12,84,664 maunds, were less than in the preceding year by 26,041 maunds, and after allowing for wastage, the closing balance stood at 24,69,648 maunds. In addition, at the close of the year, there were 1,75,680 maunds of salt lying afloat in ships in the port of Calcutta against 3,50,184 maunds at the end of 1902-1903. At Chittagong 1,06,166 maunds of salt were lying afloat at the close of the year.

During the year under report the percentage of the total importations which was bonded in the Sulkea and Kidderpore Dock *golas* amounted to 68 per cent. as against 71 per cent. in the previous year. The decrease is due to a falling off in the imports of *karkatch* salts, which usually go into bond.

Imports.

462. The importations into Calcutta advanced during the year by 6·6 per cent., particularly in the case of imports from the United Kingdom, Germany and Aden. The decrease in the importations of *karkatch* salt from Rawaya and Salif was partly due to difficulties of freight. For some months no imports were received from Salif owing to labour difficulties caused by differences between the Turkish Government and the neighbouring Arab tribes. The decrease in the imports from the Persian Gulf is attributed to a falling off in the number of Arab sailing ships employed in the trade. There was a marked decrease in the importations from Bombay which is reported to have been the result of the heavy losses sustained by the importers, who had large stocks in bond at the close of the previous year, when the rate of duty was reduced. The higher rate of duty had already been paid at

Bombay on 95 per cent. of the salt imported, and no remission of duty on the stock in bond was allowed. A feature of the year was the importation of a considerable quantity (nearly 1½ lakhs of maunds) of Madras salt. It is probable that the salt trade with the Madras ports will increase under the new rules, which allow salt to be exported without the prepayment of duty.

In Chittagong the importations declined by 23·4 per cent. as compared with those of the previous year, but there was an increase of 35·5 per cent. in comparison with 1901-1902. It is reported that a vessel with 3,000 tons of salt from Aden entered on the last day of the year, and the inclusion of her cargo (81,667 maunds) in the statistics would have materially altered the comparison.

Sales of imported salt from shipboard and bond.

463. There was an increase of 1·3 per cent. in the sales of imported salt, of which 21 per cent. was sold from shipboard, and 79 per cent. from bond, against 19 and 81 per cent., respectively, in the preceding year. In Calcutta the sales from the importing vessels direct increased by 13·2 per cent., while there was a decrease of 3·7 per cent. in the sales from bond. It is reported that for several weeks before the budget was published clearances were very small, as the trade anticipated a further reduction in the duty. Of the vessels carrying salt into Calcutta during the year, 94 per cent. were steamers.

The increase in the total sales of Chittagong amounted to 11·3 per cent.

Transactions in the Sulkea and Kidderpore Dock *golas*.

464. The turn-over at Sulkea was 94,99,784 maunds against 1,04,09,921 maunds in the previous year. At Kidderpore the turn-over was 55,05,970 maunds in comparison with 50,74,011 maunds in 1902-1903.

The bonding accommodation at Sulkea has been extended, and will be further increased. Administrative sanction has also been accorded to the construction of new *golas* on the foreshore at Sulkea.

Inland bonded warehouses.

465. There were in all 27 private bonded warehouses open at the close of the year, all of which, excepting two at Chandbali, were in Eastern Bengal.

The quantity of salt despatched to these inland bonded warehouses amounted to 13,44,528 maunds (8,09,618 maunds from shipboard and 4,44,910 maunds from the *golas* in Calcutta) as compared with 12,58,769 maunds (6,98,209 maunds from shipboard and 5,60,560 maunds from the *golas*) in 1902-1903, an increase of nearly 7 per cent. Ninety-five per cent. of the salt despatched to the inland *golas* was Liverpool salt, 3 per cent. Aden crushed salt, and 1 per cent. each Hamburg and Rawaya crushed salt.

Inland transport of duty-paid salt.

466. In all 94,88,821 maunds of duty paid salt were conveyed from Calcutta inland as well as to Orissa during the year.

There was a decrease of ·5 per cent. in the total quantity so transported. Of the aggregate quantity despatched from Calcutta, 23·08 per cent. was conveyed by boats, 10·07 per cent. by steamers and flats, and 66·85 per cent. by rail.

Imports of Madras salt into Orissa by land.

467. The quantity of Madras *karkatch* and refined salt imported into Orissa by land during the year under report was 9,18,823 maunds against 8,28,823 maunds in the previous year, showing an increase of 10·8 per cent.

Consumption in Bengal.

468. The total quantity of salt which passed into consumption in the entire Province of Bengal during the year under review was 1,11,48,331 maunds. This is exclusive of 1,58,609 maunds, being the net exports by land, and inclusive of 22,276 maunds educed from saltpetre. In comparison with the preceding year the figures show an increase of 1,02,641 maunds, or ·93 per cent. Of the total quantity the saliferous tracts (including the whole of Orissa) took 20,08,603 maunds, or 18 per cent., and the rest of the Province 91,39,728 maunds, or 82 per cent. The resulting rate of consumption per head in the saliferous tracts, including Orissa, was 6 seers 1 chitak, or 12·47 lbs., and in the rest of the Province, 5 seers 7 chitaks, or 11·18 lbs. The corresponding averages during the previous year were 12·21 lbs. in the saliferous tracts, and 11·18 lbs. in the rest of the Province. Figures for the past five years show that there has been a steady yearly increase in consumption.

The rates of consumption per head of the population in the Bombay and Madras Presidencies during 1902-1903 were 10·38 lbs. and 16·05 lbs., respectively.

During the year under report the consumption of salt within the Salt Law area was practically stationary, the average rate of consumption showing an increase in the districts of Midnapore, Howrah, Chittagong, and Noakhali; and a decline in those of the 24-Parganas, Khulna, and Backergunge.

Prices of salt in Bengal generally.

469. In all districts the average wholesale prices of salt fell during the year under report owing to the reduction in the rate of duty. The average wholesale price for the whole Province was Rs. 3-2-10 per maund as compared with Rs. 3-10-9 in 1902-1903.

The average wholesale price during the year of Liverpool salt per hundred maunds as sold from the ship's side in the port of Calcutta, exclusive of duty, amounted to Rs. 53-11-5 as compared with Rs. 56-3-9 in 1902-1903. Prices, which in 1902-1903 varied from Rs. 64-10-8 to Rs. 47-8-8, fluctuated in the year under report from Rs. 50 to Rs. 56-9-7.

Results of the reduction in duty.

470. A whole year's figures are now available since the duty on salt was reduced. So far as the wholesale trade is concerned, it is manifest that it has secured the full benefit of the reduction, as the provincial average wholesale, price was just 8 annas less than in the year before. Reports from various parts of the province likewise show that the retail price has everywhere gone down by 1½ pies to 3 pies per seer, or 5 annas to 10 annas per maund, which would seem to indicate that the retail purchaser of not less than a seer at a time has also benefited. It is, however, noteworthy that the reduction of duty has not, so far, stimulated consumption; for the increase in sales during the year amounted only to about one lakh of maunds against an increase of 6 lakhs in 1902-1903 and of 2 lakhs in 1901-1902, with the old rate of duty. It is possible that the results would have been different but for the fact referred to in paragraph 463 that for several weeks before the close of the year clearances were greatly curtailed in expectation of a further reduction in duty.

Preventive operations, etc.

471. Operations for the prevention of the illicit manufacture of salt were carried on, as in previous years, in the districts of the 24-Parganas, Midnapore Howrah, Khulna and Chittagong, and in those of the Orissa Division. Illicit salt was attached, released, and confiscated in 1,135, 7, and 1,510 cases, respectively, during the year under review, to the extent of 3,272, 3,157, and 189 maunds. The number of seizures and unsuccessful house-searches was 969 and 19, respectively. There were 577 prosecutions during the year. Out of 732 persons arrested and brought to trial, 642 were convicted, showing a percentage of 87·7. Cases of illicit manufacture of salt numbered 500 as compared with 673 in the previous year. The fines and forfeitures realized during the year amounted to Rs. 4,991, while Rs. 6,193 were disbursed as rewards.

Trade in saltpetre.

472. The quantity of salt educed in the manufacture of saltpetre and removed from all the refineries in the Province on payment of duty during the year was 22,276 maunds as compared with 16,847 maunds similarly removed in 1902-1903.

Financial results.

473. The financial results of the year as compared with those of 1902-1903 show a decrease of 18·6 per cent. in the receipts and an increase of 6·4 per cent. in the charges, giving a net revenue of Rs. 2,13,24,128, which is less than that of 1902-1903 by 19 per cent. The decrease in receipts occurs mainly under the two heads of the Import and Excise duties on salt. The falling off under the former head was due to the reduction of the rate of duty, and that under the latter to the exhaustion of the stocks of Lake salt in Orissa.

EXCISE.

[Report on the Administration of the Excise Department in Bengal for 1903-1904; Financial and Commercial Statistics of British India, Eleventh Issue; Section V.]

Excise Revenue and Charges.

474. The excise revenue of the year amounted to Rs. 1,62,96,470, charges to Rs. 8,12,836, and the net revenue to Rs. 1,54,83,634.

The net revenue shows an increase of Rs. 4,68,511, or 3·12 per cent., over the figure of the previous year, and is the highest on record.

The total revenue showed an increase of Rs. 5,08,741, or 3·2 per cent. The increase was common to all but eight districts. The largest increase (Rs. 94,451) took place in Manbhum. The increase was also considerable in the 24-Parganas (Rs. 47,773), Gaya (Rs. 35,365), Saran (Rs. 34,321), Calcutta (Rs. 28,629), and Ranchi (Rs. 28,292). On the other hand, the decrease was heavy in Chittagong (Rs. 68,309), Midnapore (Rs. 15,143), and Cuttack (Rs. 10,292). There was an increase under every head except Opium, Rum, and Majum. The largest increase occurred, as in the previous year, under the head "Country spirits," being Rs. 4,45,075. Ganja comes next with an increase of Rs. 69,602, followed by "Miscellaneous," *pachwai* and *tari*, which

yielded an increase of Rs. 24,004, Rs. 21,712, and Rs. 18,528, respectively. The largest decrease (Rs. 60,062) occurred under the head "Opium." The fluctuations in the revenue under the several heads of exciseable articles are discussed in the sections devoted to them.

Of the gross demand of Rs. 1,63,33,869, a sum of Rs. 1,62,96,470, or 99·7 per cent., was realized. Taking the population of Bengal according to the last census at 75 millions, the incidence of the excise revenue of the year is 3 annas 6 pies per head, or Rs. 2-3 per every 10 of the population as against 3 annas 4 pies in the previous year; but allowing for an increase of 7 per thousand per annum as representing the average annual growth of population, the incidence of the excise revenue is 3 annas 5 pies per head.

There has been a net increase of Rs. 4,91,960 in the settlements for the current year, which is shared by all the Divisions excepting Burdwan, which shows a decrease of Rs. 34,114. The increase is large in the Patna (Rs. 2,38,309) and Chota Nagpur (Rs. 93,003) Divisions. The increase is generally attributed to favourable settlements, owing to competition among bidders. The decrease in the Burdwan Division occurs in the districts of Burdwan and Birbhum, where the decline is due to want of competition on account of poor harvests. Thirteen districts show an increase of over Rs. 20,000, and only two a decrease of an equal amount.

475. The *Central Distillery* or fixed duty system is in force in the Sonthal Parganas (Bhagalpur Division) and throughout the Burdwan, Presidency, Dacca, and Orissa Divisions, with outstills only in certain isolated and sparsely populated tracts in Bankura and Midnapore, in the jungle tracts of Cuttack, and in the district of Angul and Khondmals. **Country Spirit.**

The *Outstill* system is in force throughout the Rajshahi and Chittagong Divisions, in the Chota Nagpur Division, except Hazaribagh, in the districts of Purnea and Malda in the Bhagalpur Division, and in the district of Angul and Khondmals in the Orissa Division; while in the Patna Division, in the districts of Monghyr and Bhagalpur in the Bhagalpur Division, and in Hazaribagh what is known as "the dual system" prevails, *i.e.*, there is a central distillery in each district for the supply of the principal town area and outstills for the rest of the district. A small area in Manbhum (Chota Nagpur Division) bordering on Burdwan is under the Central Distillery system.

476. The total receipts from distillery liquor and outstills were Rs. 79,03,662, showing an increase over the previous year's figures of Rs. 4,45,075. The total number of licenses issued was the same as in the previous year, viz., 1,237. There was an increase in the revenue from license-fees from Rs. 13,29,293 to Rs. 13,56,030, or to the extent of Rs. 26,737. The increase is generally attributed to favourable settlements and to larger collections of advance fees. **Distilleries.**

The consumption of distillery liquor in L.-P. gallons rose from 652,009 to 692,664; there was thus an increase of 40,655 gallons L.-P. Of the 31 districts in which the distillery system is in force, there was an increase of 44,818 gallons L.-P. in 21 districts and a decrease of 4,163 gallons in the remaining 10 districts. The increase was most marked in Calcutta, where the consumption rose from 246,272 to 257,635 gallons L.-P., or by 11,363 gallons L.-P. The whole of this increase took place in the latter end of the year. A portion of the increase was due to the advance supplies taken by the retail vendors in the latter part of March, as the Superintendent's office remained closed during the first four days of April 1904 on account of the Easter holidays. As for the rest of the increase, the Superintendent of Excise Revenue, Calcutta, has not yet been able to come to any definite conclusion. The Commissioner of Excise considers it to have been due to some extent to the prosperous condition of the people.

The total receipts, which were made up of license-fees, distillery fees, and duty, amounted to Rs. 38,90,440 as against Rs. 37,32,020 in the previous year, showing an increase of Rs. 1,58,420.

477. The total number of licenses issued was 2,145 as against 2,134 in the previous year, showing an increase of 11. **Outstills.**

The revenue from license-fees increased from Rs. 37,26,567 to Rs. 40,13,222, or by Rs. 2,86,655. Of the 30 districts in which the outstill system was in force, there was an increase of Rs. 2,95,031 in 27 districts and a

decrease of Rs. 8,376 in the remaining three districts. The increase was large in Manbhum (Rs. 81,561), Ranchi (Rs. 26,729), Saran (Rs. 24,256), Gaya Rs. 21,121), Jalpaiguri (Rs. 17,221), Hazaribagh (Rs. 15,500), Palamau Rs. 15,373), Purnea (Rs. 13,506), Monghyr (Rs. 12,718), and Muzaffarpur Rs. 10,941). The increase is generally attributed to healthy competition at the annual sales.

Country Rum.

478. Ten licenses for the retail sale of rum only were taken out, viz., nine in Calcutta and one in Darjeeling, as against eleven licenses in the previous year In Calcutta one rum shop remained closed throughout the year, as an unobjectionable site could not be secured. Rum is also sold under cover of licenses for the sale of distillery spirits and of imported liquor. The receipts from license-fees amounted to Rs. 21,762 as against Rs. 24,737 in the previous year, showing a decrease of Rs. 2,975.

Rum was supplied from the Albion Distillery at Sibpur in the district of Howrah, from the Rosa Distillery in the district of Shahjahanpur in the United Provinces, and from several distilleries in the Madras Presidency. The Albion Distillery at Sibpur, which had not been a paying concern, was closed in the early part of the year.

The total consumption was 36,291 L.-P. gallons, of which 28,549 gallons were Shahjahanpur rum. A total decrease in consumption of 2,230 gallons is attributed to ordinary fluctuations in the trade. As a result of the decreased consumption, the revenue from duty fell from Rs. 2,23,874 to Rs. 2,08,205, or to the extent of Rs. 15,669.

Imported Liquor.

479. The total number of licenses issued for the sale of imported liquor was 653 as against 645 in the previous year, showing an increase of 8. The total receipts, which are derived from license-fees alone, amounted to Rs. 3,76,951 as against Rs. 3,74,075, showing an increase of Rs. 2,876. There was a total increase amounting to Rs. 18,272 in 25 districts, while in 19 districts there was a decrease amounting to Rs. 15,396. In two districts the revenue was stationary. The increase was due to favourable settlements, collection of a larger amount of advance fees, and increase in the number of licenses. There was a decrease of Rs. 9,169 in Calcutta, due in part to the decrease in the number of wholesale licenses and to the closing of a number of bars attached to hotels in consequence of the prohibition of the employment of females.

Methylated Spirit.

480. The total quantity of methylated spirit passed out was 101,999 gallons L.-P. as against 76,418 gallons L.-P. in the previous year. The revenue from duty, however, fell from Rs. 4,538 to Rs. 3,023.

Tari.

481. The total number of licenses increased from 15,250 to 16,075, and the receipts from Rs. 10,77,171 to Rs. 10,95,699.

The number of licenses issued was 13,839 as against 13,312 in the previous year. The receipts from fermented *tari* increased from Rs. 10,69,578 to Rs. 10,87,971, the increase being due to favourable settlements, increase in the number of shops, and realization of a larger amount of advance fees. As in previous years, the bulk of the revenue was derived from the seven districts of the Patna Division and Monghyr and Bhagalpur which contributed between them Rs. 6,79,847, or 62 per cent. of the total amount.

Licenses for the sale of fresh *tari* were issued in 27 districts, the number of licenses increased from 1,938 to 2,236, and the revenue from Rs. 5,651 to Rs. 5,957.

Pachwai.

482. There was an increase in the total number of licenses issued from 13,030 to 13,958, and in the receipts from Rs. 5,76,226 to Rs. 5,97,938, there being thus an increase of 928 licenses and of Rs. 21,712 in revenue. The number of licenses for retail sales increased from 1,651 to 1,676, and the revenue from Rs. 5,27,855 to Rs. 5,48,889. The increase in revenue (Rs. 21,034) was due to the settlement of shops at enhanced fees on account of competition at the annual sales and also to the increase in the number of licenses. The increase is most marked in Burdwan (Rs. 16,482). As in previous years, the bulk of the *pachwai* revenue was derived from Burdwan (Rs. 2,38,077) and Birbhum (Rs. 1,39,349), the total revenue on this account from the two districts being Rs. 3,77,426, or 63·1 per cent. of the entire revenue. The receipts were also considerable in the Sonthal Parganas (Rs. 57,129), Darjeeling (Rs. 41,540), Murshidabad (Rs. 27,203), and Bankura (Rs. 22,448).

The number of licenses increased from 11,879 to 12,282, and the revenue from Rs. 48,371 to Rs. 49,049. The increase was large in Dinajpur, Jalpaiguri and Purnea.

Country Beer.

483. There were two breweries in the district of Darjeeling as in the previous year. The total quantity of beer issued from the two breweries was 70,369 gallons. The prescribed duty of one anna per gallon was levied on all beer issued. The total revenue, which is made up of license fees and duty, amounted to Rs. 4,563.

Ganja.

484. The area cultivated was 2,730 bighas, which is less than the limit of 976 acres fixed by the Government of India. The outturn shows a very large increase, which is reported to be due partly to timely rains, partly to the care and trouble which the cultivators bestowed on the crop, and partly to the manufacture of a large quantity of both sorts of flat ganja on account of an increased demand for these two varieties. The average outturn per bigha was 3 maunds 32 seers; but if all kinds of ganja are reduced to the level of *chur*, the figure should be 2 maunds 18 seers 11 chitaks against 1 maund 17 seers 9 chitaks in 1902-1903. The price of *chur* ganja was very high until the month of October owing to the large demand for it, but it declined gradually until it stood at Rs. 16 to Rs. 20 per maund at the end of the year. Prices of other sorts of ganja also fell to a considerable extent towards the close of the year in consequence of a bumper crop.

A Joint-Magistrate was deputed by Government in January last to supervise the manufacture, weighment, and storage of ganja in the public golas at Naugaon. He submitted a special report with his suggestions for the prevention of the smuggling of ganja from the ganja mehal which was forwarded to Government after the close of the year.

The number of licenses for the retail sale of ganja issued during the year was 2,793 as against 2,760 in 1902-1903. The license-fees realized amounted to Rs. 16,52,384, giving an increase of Rs. 57,955 over the figure of the previous year, and this enhancement was mainly due to the increase in the number of licenses. The rate of duty on *chur* ganja was raised from Rs. 7-8 to Rs. 10 per seer in the districts of the Orissa Division, and from Rs. 9 to Rs. 12 per seer in other districts with effect from the 1st January 1904.

As in previous years, ganja was consumed in every district in the Province. The consumption was largest in Calcutta. It was also considerable in the districts of Mymensingh, Shahabad, Dacca, Purnea, Monghyr, Bhagalpur and the 24-Parganas. The quantity of each kind of ganja issued on payment of duty was *chur* 1,928 maunds, round 1,588 maunds, flat small twigs 161 maunds, flat large twigs 1,818 maunds. The total duty levied was Rs. 16,79,338. Four thousand nine hundred and fifty-four gross maunds (taking all the varieties together) were consumed in Bengal, while 541 maunds were exported duty-paid. There was an increase of 116 maunds of ganja in the total duty-paid issues, while the total amount of the duty levied shows a comparatively small increase of Rs. 11,647 only. This is due to a larger issue of flat ganja, large twigs, which contains most inert matter and the duty on which is the lowest.

The total receipts amounted to Rs. 33,31,722 as against Rs. 32,62,120 in the year 1902-1903, the net increase being Rs. 69,602. The increase was most marked in the districts of Mymensingh (Rs. 13,336), the 24-Parganas (Rs. 11,171), Shahabad (Rs. 10,536), Rajshahi (Rs. 7,153), and Manbhum (Rs. 6,943). The increase in all the districts, except Rajshahi, is both in license-fees and duty, and in the last-mentioned district in duty only.

The incidence of license-fees per seer was Rs. 7·5 and of duty Rs. 7·6, giving a total taxation of Rs. 15.1, the figures for the previous year being Rs. 7·4, Rs. 7·7, and Rs. 15·1, respectively.

Siddhi, Bhang or Sabzi.

485. Four hundred and thirty-four licenses were taken out and 77 permits were issued for the sale of *bhang* for medicinal purposes. The total quantity of *siddhi* issued from district warehouses was 1,143 maunds.

The receipts from license-fees and duty amounted to Rs. 88,984. An increase over the previous year's figures of Rs. 3,960 is contributed both by license-fees (Rs. 2,681) and duty (Rs. 1,279). The increase in license-fees was due to the settlement of shops at enhanced fees and to the increase in the

number of licenses. The increase in duty was due to increased consumption as explained above.

Charas. 486. The number of licenses issued was 52. The total quantity of *charas* imported during the year was 28 maunds 23 seers 14 chitaks. Receipts from license-fees amounted to Rs. 18,147 and from duty to Rs. 14,094.

Majum. 487. During the year under report 18 licenses were issued.

The receipts which were derived from license-fees alone amounted to Rs. 1,722. Of the total receipts, Calcutta, Dacca and Shahabad contributed Rs. 1,411, or 81·9 per cent.

Opium. 488. The total number of licenses issued for the retail vend of opium was 1,716. The number of druggists' permits issued was 1,814. There was an increase in the revenue from license-fees from Rs. 7,22,104 to Rs. 7,29,854. The increase is generally attributed to favourable settlements and to larger collections of advance fees. The quantity of opium sold was 2,258 maunds 15 seers 1 chitak as against 2,351 maunds 20 seers 15 chitaks in the previous year, showing a decrease of 93 maunds 5 seers 14 chitaks. The decrease was large in Chittagong (86 maunds 26 seers), where it was due to the close and constant watch kept by the Excise staff over the retail sales in order to check the smuggling of the drug into Arracan, and to the increased facilities afforded by the local authorities for the supply of opium in Akyab. As a result of the decreased consumption, receipts from duty fell from Rs 19,30,050 to Rs. 18,62,238.

Under Government orders issued towards the close of the year, a condition is now inserted in the form of licenses for the retail sale of opium and in druggists' permits, prohibiting sale of the drug to children under 12 years of age.

Cocaine. 489. Licenses for the sale of cocaine are granted to approved druggists and chemists, a nominal fee of Re. 1 being charged for each license. The total number of licenses issued was 344, and the receipts from license-fees amounted to Rs. 349.

The number of persons convicted of illicit sale and possession of cocaine was 181, 169 being convicted in Calcutta. In Calcutta the drug was largely used by all classes of the people as an intoxicant and as a stimulant, and strenuous efforts were successfully made to prevent the spread of the cocaine habit.

Offences against the Excise and Opium Laws. 490. Four thousand and twenty-four persons were arrested for offences against the Excise and Opium laws during the year against 3,625 persons in the previous year, showing an increase of 399, which is mainly due to an abnormal rise in the number of cases of illicit distillation in the district of the Sonthal Parganas. The large increase in the number of these prosecutions is somewhat at variance with the anticipation expressed last year that the cheapening of licit liquor was acting as a successful check upon malpractices, but it is to be noted that the more numerous prosecutions were largely the result of more energetic measures against the Paharias, and that the consumption of distillery liquor increased slightly. The percentage of convictions was 89·6. The fines imposed during the year amounted to Rs. 78,418, and the total amount distributed in rewards was Rs. 66,240, or 84·4 per cent. of the fines imposed.

Bill to amend the Excise Act. 491. During the year a Bill to consolidate and amend the Bengal Excise Act, VII (B.C.) of 1878, was introduced in Council. About the close of the year the Select Committee submitted their report, in consequence of which certain important provisions were inserted in the Bill with the object of laying down a procedure for ascertaining public opinion before the grant of licenses for the sale of intoxicants. These provisions were approved by the Lieutenant-Governor who considered that instructions in regard to the consulting of local opinion should be contained in the law itself and should not be relegated to the less prominent and impressive sphere of rules or executive instructions. The Government of India while conveying their unreserved acceptance of the principles underlying these proposals have expressed a doubt whether the precise procedure provided by the draft Bill is well designed to give effect to the object in view. The opinions of District Officers who have been consulted on the point are awaited.

STAMPS.

[Resolution by the Board of Revenue, Lower Provinces, on the working of the Stamp Department for 1903-1904; Financial and Commercial Statistics of British India, Eleventh Issue; Section VII.]

492. The revenue collected under the Stamp and Court-fees Acts amounted to Rs. 1,98,35,542 against Rs. 1,95,70,438 in the previous year, showing an increase of Rs. 2,65,104. The figures adopted in the revised budget estimate for the year were Rs. 1,96,00,000, or Rs. 2,35,542 less than the actual realisations. The increase of revenue was obtained under the head of Judicial stamps. Stamp Revenue.

The total charges during the year amounted to Rs. 5,24,914, being an increase of 5·9 per cent. over the figures for 1902-1903, which was mainly under "refunds."

493. The sale-proceeds of Court-fee stamps, excluding stamps for copies, rose from Rs. 1,31,09,068 to Rs. 1,34,39,977, that is, by Rs. 3,30,909. The greater portion of the increase was contributed by the districts of Monghyr (Rs. 54,607), Tippera (Rs 46,175), Patna (Rs. 37,930), Backergunge (Rs. 36,407), Burdwan (Rs. 26,367), Dacca (Rs. 24,978), Bhagalpur (Rs. 22,341) and Noakhali (Rs. 21,938). The increase in Monghyr is attributed by the Collector to the institution during the year of a large number of civil suits which had been withheld in the preceding year on account of plague. The increase in the district of Patna was due to the institution of a larger number of cases under the Indian Succession Act, 1865. The increase in other districts is generally attributed to the increased number and value of civil and rent-suits. Court-fee stamps.

The largest decrease (Rs. 48,246) occurred in Gaya, and is attributed to the prevalence of plague which kept people away from the Courts. The decrease (Rs. 19,526) in Darbhanga is ascribed by the Collector to a marked falling off in the number of rent-suits, which had increased abnormally in the years immediately following the recent settlement operations in the district.

494. There was a net decrease of Rs. 62,903 in the receipts from the sale of non-judicial stamps, due to a decline in the receipts under the heads of impressed stamps, impressed labels, and notarial stamps. The revenue derived from the sale of impressed stamps amounted to Rs. 34,89,903 in comparison with Rs. 35,59,667 in the preceding year. The number of deeds executed was fewer, for which it is not possible to give any particular explanation. The revenue derived from the sale of *hundis*, or inland bills-of-exchange, was Rs. 1,31,860, showing an increase of Rs. 6,374 as compared with the receipts of the preceding year. The receipts from the sale of impressed labels, which are used only in Calcutta, were noticeably smaller than in the preceding year, when the receipts were abnormally large. There was a satisfactory increase in the sale of one-anna receipt stamps, especially in Calcutta. The increase in the sale of forms for cheques or receipts is attributed to the larger issues of cheque books to District and Local Boards, and to the growth of trade in Calcutta. Non-judicial stamps.

495. The total number of vendors for the sale of judicial and non-judicial stamps during the year was 6,253, or a decrease, as compared with the previous year, of 568 persons. A considerable reduction in the number of vendors was effected in the district of Chittagong, where the stamp vendors' register was overhauled during the year. Stamp vendors.

The discount allowed during the year exceeded that of the preceding year by Rs. 1,783,—the result of the increased sales.

496. The total number of cases in which deficient duty and penalty were levied by the Courts during the year shows a decrease of 38, and there was a decrease of Rs. 78 in the amount of duty and penalty realised in comparison with the figures of the preceding year. On the other hand, there was an increase of 3 in the number of cases decided, but a decrease of Rs. 19,562 in the duty and penalty realised by Revenue Officers as compared with the figures of 1902-1903. The decrease occurred mainly in Calcutta, where there had been an abnormal increase in the previous year. Deficit duty.

497. The number of cases instituted for the infringement of the provisions of the Stamp Act was 356, in which 376 persons were brought to trial against 220 cases and 252 persons in the preceding year. The fines imposed amounted to Rs. 3,747, in comparison with Rs. 1,557, while the amount distributed in rewards was Rs. 2,420 against Rs. 551. Prosecutions under the Stamp Act.

498. Of the cases of the valuation of estates for the issue of probates or letters of administration reported during 1903-1904, 81·1 per cent. were enquired into. The corresponding percentage in the preceding year was Valuation of estates for probate, &c.

78·2. The proportion borne by the deficit duty realised to the amount originally paid was 8·2 per cent. as compared with 14·0 per cent. in the previous year.

INCOME-TAX.

[Resolution by the Board of Revenue, Lower Provinces, on the administration of the Income-tax Department for 1903-1904; Financial and Commercial Statistics of British India, Eleventh Issue Section VIII.]

Financial results.

499. The receipts, charges and net revenue of the year were respectively Rs. 49,61,823, Rs. 1,94,938 and Rs. 47,66,885.

The net revenue showed a decrease of 15·7 per cent. as compared with an increase of 3·9 per cent. in 1902-1903, this result being due to the enactment of Act XI of 1903, raising the minimum income assessable to income-tax. Deducting collections on incomes below Rs. 1,000 from the receipts of the previous year, the net revenue for the year under report shows an increase of Rs. 1,16,693, or 2·5 per cent.

Collections.

500. The collections under Parts I, II and IV showed a decrease of Rs. 1,47,642, Rs. 92,572 and Rs. 6,62,604, or 11·8, 14·03 and 18·3 per cent., respectively. On the other hand, the realisations from interest on securities showed an increase of Rs. 5,882, or 6·4 per cent. in comparison with the preceding year. If the collections on incomes below Rs. 1,000 be deducted from those of the preceding year, the year under report would show an increase of Rs. 52,881, or 5·04 per cent. under Part I, and of Rs. 86,521, or 3·009 per cent. under Part IV, while the collections under Part II would show a decrease of Rs. 92,270, or 14 per cent., which is ascribed to depression in the coal trade and to a falling off in the profits of jute mills and presses.

The number of persons finally assessed decreased by 74,631, or 59·2 per cent., while the final demand for the year fell by Rs. 8,51,746, or 16·1 per cent. The elimination of assessees with incomes below Rs. 1,000, therefore, has relieved more than one-half of the former assessees, while resulting in a decrease of only one-sixth of the demand. Excluding the exemptions under the recent legislation, the number of persons finally assessed and the final demand for the year under report rose by 5,036 persons and by Rs. 27,774, or by 10·8 and ·6 per cent., respectively, as compared with a rise of 1·7 and 2·9 per cent., respectively, during 1902-1903 in comparison with the preceding year.

The percentage of collections on the final demand for the year was 96·04, as compared with 96·6 during 1902-1903. The districts of Birbhum, Bankura, Murshidabad, Bogra, Dacca, Backergunge, Tippera, Noakhali, Gaya, Champaran, Darbhanga, Malda, Cuttack and Palamau succeeded in collecting the entire demand within the year. The prescribed standard of 95 per cent. was attained in all the other districts, excepting Calcutta and Burdwan, where the percentages were 93·8 and 93·5, respectively. The deficiency in Calcutta during the year was due to the fact that assessments amounting to Rs. 1,02,370 were made during the last quarter of the year, while in Burdwan the non-payment of the tax of Rs. 4,142 by one assessee affected the results adversely.

With the disappearance of the smaller assessees the percentage of collections should exhibit an improvement as soon as the partial disorganisation occasioned by the change in the limit of assessable incomes has subsided.

Cost of assessment and collection.

501. The total cost of assessment and collection of the tax during the [illegible] Rs. 17,525, or 8·2 per cent., in comparison with the previous year, owing [illegible] entertained both in the Collectors' and Commissioners' offices, including the office of the Collector of Income-tax, Calcutta, and to the reorganisation of the Warrant Establishment in Calcutta by the abolition of the posts of two bailiffs and the employment of permanent peons in the place of the *ticca* peons formerly entertained.

These economies were rendered possible by the elimination of assessees under Rs. 1,000.

Further reorganisations were made with effect from the 1st April 1904 the principal feature of which was a reduction from 43 to 24 in the number of assessors, who are now posted to divisions and not to districts as before. The total savings estimated from the changes made are Rs. 36,996 a year.

Forest Revenue.

[Progress Report of Forest Administration in the Lower Provinces of Bengal for 1903-1904.]

502. The receipts from forests for the forest year—1st July 1903—30th June 1904—were Rs. 10,47,521: charges amounted to Rs. 6,89,435, leaving a net income of Rs. 3,58,086. Receipts and net income are much below the figures of the previous year. For the whole of a decrease in the receipts, amounting to roughly two lakhs of rupees, the Sundarbans Division was responsible. The fall in revenue is attributed to a large decrease in removals by purchasers, and a comparatively small increase in expenditure is ascribed to the carrying out of necessary improvements in administration, and the undertaking of works with a view to opening out unworked or little worked forests. The Tista, Buxa, Angul and Palamau Divisions worked at a loss during the year.

Provincial Finance.

503. PROVINCIAL.—The following statement shows the actual receipts and charges on account of Provincial Services for 1903-1904 as compared with those of 1902-1903:—

RECEIPTS.	1902-1903.	1903-1904.
	Rs.	Rs.
Opening balance	49,05,782	55,29,422
Principal Heads of Revenue—		
I.—Land Revenue { Proper ...	1,06,87,027	1,07,16,516
I.—Land Revenue { Adjustments	—8,684	+1,03,26,400
IV.—Stamps	1,46,77,828	1,48,76,636
V.—Excise	78,93,957	81,47,972
VI.—Provincial Rates	49,73,907	50,40,440
VII.—Customs	2,28,267	2,58,337
VIII.—Assessed Taxes	29,26,092	24,72,908
IX.—Forests	6,28,124	5,32,761
X.—Registration	8,45,383	8,33,226
Total ...	4,28,51,991	5,32,05,196
XII.—Interest	3,47,632	3,25,780
Receipts by Civil Department—		
XVI.—Law and Justice—		
Courts of Law	8,10,899	8,08,224
Jails	12,08,284	14,15,485
XVII.—Police	2,15,857	1,84,038
XVIII.—Marine	12,73,632	13,48,977
XIX.—Education	7,08,909	7,08,701
XX.—Medical	2,23,688	2,30,237
XXI.—Scientific and other Minor Departments	2,64,841	2,45,647
Total ...	4[illegible],06,110	49,41,309
Miscellaneous—		
XXII.—Receipts in aid of Superannuation	90,657	86,868
XXIII.—Stationery and Printing ...	1,37,910	1,45,615
XXV.—Miscellaneous	9,75,078	11,33,785
Total ...	12,03,645	13,66,268
Irrigation—		
XXIX.—Major Works (direct receipts)	21,21,308	20,20,889
XXX.—Minor Works and Navigation— By Public Works Department	5,48,631	5,75,240
By Civil Department ...	1,12,818	1,27,829
Total ...	27,82,757	27,23 958
Buildings and Roads—		
XXXII.—Civil Works—		
By Public Works Department	2,46,627	5,41,934
By Civil Department ...	2,53,030	2,49,736
Total ...	4,99,657	7,91,670
Contributions	62,944	65,951
Total ...	5,24,54,736	6,34,20,132
GRAND TOTAL ...	5,73,60,518	6,89,49,554

EXPENDITURE.	1902-1903.	1903-1904.
Direct demand on the revenues—	Rs.	Rs.
1. Refunds and Drawbacks ...	2,30,650	1,87,838
2. Assignments and Compensations	1,58,514	1,65,710
3. Land Revenue	38,16,057	39,50,712
6. Stamps	5,46,686	5,54,999
7. Excise	3,87,764	4,06,780
8. Provincial Rates	1,08,445	89,289
9. Customs	8,96,960	9,77,774
10. Assessed Taxes	1,00,593	92,889
11. Forests	3,19,007	3,51,754
12. Registration	4,76,315	4,80,185
Total ...	70,40,991	72,57,374
13. Interest on ordinary debt ...	2,01,879	1,96,719
Post Office, Telegraph and Mint—		
15. Post Office	3,933	6,054
Salaries and expenses of the Civil Department—		
18. General Administration	22,04,569	19,04,676
19. Law and Justice { Courts of Law ...	95,54,791	96,48,517
19. Law and Justice { Jails	26,91,698	27,33,193
20. Police	68,22,105	65,71,635
21. Marine	10,53,891	10,64,645
22. Education	31,12,780	34,41,632
24. Medical	20,26,388	21,48,271
25. Political	9,381	19,314
26. Scientific and other Minor Departments	5,70,527	7,00,871
Total ...	2,75,45,130	2,82,33,954
Miscellaneous—		
29. Superannuation, &c.	24,71,941	25,84,377
30. Stationery and Printing	13,73,252	12,42,046
32. Miscellaneous	3,50,251	3,43,646
Total ...	41,95,444	41,70,071
Famine Relief and Insurance—		
33. Famine Relief	100	......
State Railways—		
40. Subsidized Co.'s land	......	5,311
Irrigation—		
42. Major Works—		
Working expenses	10,68,355	10,17,041
Interest on debt	24,53,824	24,52,568
43. Minor Works and Navigation—		
By Public Works Department	16,06,847	17,62,188
By Civil Department ...	4,527	5,549
Total ...	51,33,053	52,37,346
Buildings and Roads—		
45. Civil Works—		
By Public Works Department	55,69,350	74,39,073
By Civil Department ...	1,50,844	1,66,189
Total ...	57,20,194	76,05,262
Contributions	19,90,372	19,86,565
Total ...	5,18,31,096	5,46,96,636
Closing balance	55,29,422	1,42,52,918
GRAND TOTAL ...	5,73 60,518	6,89,49,554
Provincial surplus (+) or deficit (—) ...	+6,23,640	+87,23,496

504. *Receipts.*—The increase under *Land Revenue* was due to larger collections from Government estates. The *adjustment* between Imperial and Provincial revenues resulted in a net addition of Rs. 1,03,26,400 to the Provincial share of Land Revenue against a deduction of Rs. 8,684 in the preceding

year. A special grant of Rs. 50,00,000 was sanctioned from the Imperial Revenues at the outset of a new Provincial Settlement and a similar grant was made in aid of the cost of carrying out the scheme for the improvement of Calcutta. A special grant of Rs. 5,00,000 was also made for distribution to charitable and other institutions of public interest, of Rs. 1,00,000 towards the cost of the Tista Valley Road in Sikkim and of Rs. 87,000, to meet the unpaid balance of a loan taken by the Port Commissioners of Chittagong for the purchase of the steam vessel *Gekko*, the remission of which was sanctioned by His Excellency the Viceroy during his visit to the port. The fluctuations under the heads *Stamps*, *Excise*, *Assessed Taxes*, *Forests* and *Registration* which are divided in fixed proportion between Imperial and Provincial have been explained in the section on Imperial Finance. The increase under *Provincial Rates* was under collection of Public Works cess. The increase under *Customs* was chiefly under confiscations and penalties and partly under overtime fees. The decrease under *Interest* was under Advances to cultivators and drainage advances. The increase under *Jails* was under manufactures, while the decrease under *Police* was due to smaller recoveries on account of police supplied to Railway Companies, private persons and companies. The increase under *Marine* occurred in Pilotage receipts, while that under *Medical* was obtained from paying patients in hospitals. The decrease under *Scientific and other Minor Departments* was due to smaller sales of sulphate of quinine and cinchona alkaloids, while that under *Superannuation* was attributed to smaller recoveries of contributions for pensions and gratuities. The increase under *Stationery and Printing* was partly under sale of Gazettes and partly under other Press receipts, while that under *Miscellaneous* was chiefly on account of a large amount of deposits having lapsed to Government.

The decrease under *Irrigation Major Works* was due to smaller realisations of water-rates in Sone Canal, navigation receipts from the Midnapore Canal and of other miscellaneous receipts from Orissa and Tidal Canals. The increase under *Minor Works and Navigation* was due to increased tollage on rice and jute realised in the Calcutta Canals, while that under *Civil Works* in charge of the Public Works Department was chiefly due to the sale proceeds of 29 Chowringhee, the residence of the Commissioner of Police, Calcutta, and larger receipts from the profits of the Darjeeling-Himalayan Railway.

505. *Expenditure.*—The decrease under *Refunds and Drawbacks* was chiefly under Land Revenue and was due to a special adjustment made in 1902-1903 of the amount recovered from the Bettiah estate. The increase under *Land Revenue* was partly under Survey and Settlement charges and partly for larger expenditure on improvements of Government estates. The decrease under *Provincial Rates* was for smaller expenditure on revaluation work, while the increase under *Customs* was for larger payments of overtime and holiday fees. The decrease under *Assessed Taxes* was due to reduction of establishment consequent on the reduction in the number of assessees owing to the raising of the minimum income assessable to Income-Tax. The decrease under *General Administration* was due to the adjustment of only a small amount in connection with the Delhi Coronation Durbar, while a very large amount was debited on this account in 1902-1903. The increase under *Law and Justice*, *Courts of Law*, was partly under High Court owing to the appointment of an Additional Judge and an Official Referee and partly under Law Officers, Presidency Magistrates' Courts, and Civil and Sessions Courts; while that under *Jails* was for larger outlay on manufactures. The increase under *Police* was chiefly under District Executive force, partly for increase under salaries and force and partly for increase under petty construction and repairs. The increase under *Marine* was for large payments for Pilotage allowance to Free List Pilots, while that under *Education* was for the appointment of a Deputy Director, for larger expenditure on chemicals and apparatus for the Civil Engineering College, for larger expenditure on furniture and apparatus of Government-Schools, for larger expenditure in training schools and Calcutta School of Arts, for larger grants to Primary Schools, for larger building grants and the grant for the purchase of furniture for the Kindergarten Schools. The increase under *Medical* was partly under Salaries of officers and partly for a special expenditure for the purchase of equipments for the Medical College, Calcutta. The increase under *Political* was due to payment of charges in connection with the demarcation of the boundaries of the Udaipur State. The increase under

Scientific and other Minor Departments was distributed between experimental cultivation, cinchona plantation and veterinary charges, while that under *Superannuation* was due to the continued growth of expenditure of retired allowances. The decrease under *Stationery and Printing* occurred under stationery supplied from Central Stores and partly under Government Presses.

The short outlay under *Working expenses of Irrigation Major Works* was due to a decrease of expenditure on repairs, establishment and tools and plant in all the canals, while the larger outlay under *Minor Works and Navigation* was owing to the acquisition of land for the Madaripore Bhil route. The increase under *Civil Works* in charge of the Public Works Department was due to several large works undertaken during the year, viz., acquisition of land for the new Surgical block in the Medical College, for the extension of High Court, for the Presidency General Hospital, for quarters for officials of the Presidency Jail and purchase of No. 2 Kyd Street for residence of the Commissioner of Police, while the increase of *charges under Civil Officers* was attributed to the grant of Rs. 10,000 to the Kurseong Improvement Fund.

Financial Statement in Council.

506. The 12th Financial statement of the Government of Bengal was laid before the Council on the 26th March and discussed on the 4th April 1904. The most important of the subjects referred to by the non-official members were:—The new Provincial Financial Settlement, Education, Plague, Water-supply and improvement of sanitation in the mufassal, improvement of the pay and prospects of various Government employés, and the Calcutta Improvement Scheme.

The new Provincial Financial Settlement.

507. Towards the close of the year the terms of the new Provincial Financial Settlement with the Local Government were communicated by the Government of India. The settlement constitutes a new departure in that no period has been fixed for its duration, whereas the previous Financial Settlements were concluded at intervals of five years. The Government of India reserves to itself the power to revise the settlement whenever necessity may demand it, but, in the absence of any national emergency, it will continue until and unless, over a considerable series of years, it is found to be unfair either to the Local Government or to the Government of India.

In the new Settlement the Provincial shares of the receipts and charges under Assessed Taxes and Forests have been reduced from $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{1}{4}$, that under Stamps from $\frac{3}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$, and that under Excise from $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{7}{16}$. On the other hand the receipts and charges of the Registration Department have been made wholly Provincial, while the miscellaneous receipts of the Customs Department with all its charges have been made wholly Imperial. An annual assignment of Rs. 49,03,000 has been made to equalize the receipts and charges made over to the Provincial Government. A special grant of 50 lakhs was sanctioned from the Imperial Revenues at the outset of the new Settlement to compensate the Local Government for the reduction of its shares in the principal sources of revenue.

Local Finance.

[Report on Local Funds in Bengal for the year 1903-1904.]

508. The following table shows the income, expenditure, and opening and closing balances of the Incorporated Local Funds for the year 1903-1904:—

Name of Fund.	Opening Balance.	Receipts.	Total.	Payments.	Closing Balance.
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
District Fund	36,03,121	98,48,504	1,34,51,625	1.01,98,698	32,52,927
District Road Fund	74,483	3,09,543	3,84,026	2,83,114	1,00,912
District Road Account	19,993	18,556	38,549	31,917	6,632
District Post Fund	3,11,041	3,87,980	6,99,021	3,63,099	3,35,922
Inland Labour Transport Fund ...	...	17,670	17,670	17,670	...
Steam Boiler Inspection Fund ...	73,553	53,765	1,27,318	46,686	80,632
Village Chaukidari Fund ...	65,736	4,20,384	4,86,120	3,95,583	90,537
Road Patrol Fund	23,887	32,131	56,018	36,403	19,615
District Chaukidari Reward Fund ...	70,903	66,950	1,37,853	63,002	74,851
Total ...	42,42,717	1,11,55,483	1,53,98,200	1,14,36,172	39,62,028

The grants made by Government to the District Funds, the District Road Funds and the District Road Account, during the year, were Rs. 18,65.532, Rs. 1,09,585, and Rs. 11,500, respectively. The District Boards were made Public Works Disbursers from the commencement of the year, and the

payments made to them on this account were accounted for by them direct to the Public Works Department. The total payments made in Bengal on account of the Inland Labour Transport Fund amounted to Rs. 52,996, of which Rs. 5,470 were debited to the Central Provinces and Rs. 29,856 to Assam.

509. The transactions of Excluded Local Funds were as follows:—

NAME OF FUND.	Opening Balance.	Receipts.	TOTAL.	Payments.	Closing Balance.
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
Police Funds—					
Railway Police Clothing ...	3,337	5,243	8,580	5,344	3,236
Foundling Asylum	8	3,419	3,427	3,144	283
Fire Brigade ...	23,885	88,463	1,12,348	90,583	21,765
Calcutta and Suburban Police Superannuation.	11,698	38,574	50,272	37,714	12,558
Total ...	38,928	1,35,699	1,74,627	1,36,785	37,842
Marine Funds—					
Hospital Port Dues at Calcutta ...	2,45,082	1,23,730	3,68,812	76,112	2,92,700
Ditto at Chittagong	1,554	9,819	11,373	6,801	4,572
Orissa Ports (Cuttack, Puri and Balasore).	12,121	15,590	27,711	14,623	13,088
Total ...	2,58,757	1,49,139	4,07,896	97,536	3,10,360
Education Funds—					
Hindu College	—317	4,751	4,434	3,447	987
Durga Charan Laha's... ...	...	3,561	3,561	3,561	...
Jagiara	432	1,072	1,504	1,472	32
Jadu Nath Mukerjee's ...	166	...	166	166	...
Total ...	281	9,384	9,665	8,646	1,019
Medical and Charitable Funds—					
Pilgrims' Lodging-house ...	66,357	1,03,441	1,69,798	1,12,151	57,647
Cuttack Anna Chatra	11,776	10,110	21,886	20,265	1,621
Chuni Lal Seal's Endowment ...	1,963	4,246	6,209	5,309	900
Bengal Famine Orphan ...	3,185	971	4,156	2,195	1,961
Ram Lal Mukerjee's Endowment	4,816	1,746	6,562	735	5,827
Dum-Dum Outdoor Dispensary ...	5	857	862	857	5
Cantonment Hospital (Dinapore)...	...	1,221	1,221	1,206	15
Chittagong General Hospital ...	16,304	22,713	39,017	17,666	21,351
Total ...	1,04,406	1,45,305	2,49,711	1,60,384	89,327
Public Works Funds—					
Darjeeling Improvement ...	38,817	66,992	1,05,809	62,950	42,859
Khond Mahal Road	2,061	9,105	11,166	4,839	6,327
Total ...	40,878	76,097	1,16,975	67,789	49,186
Miscellaneous Funds—					
Zoological Garden	8,831	87,185	96,016	86,827	9,189
Mohsin Endowment	4,922	1,09,361	1,14,283	1,11,567	2,716
Christian Burial Board ...	8,749	19,311	28,060	18,144	9,916
Muhammadan Burial Board ...	1,216	1,697	2,913	1,818	1,095
Western Duars Market ...	11,589	15,781	27,370	13,664	13,706
Chittagong Hill Tracts Bazar ...	3,350	3,770	7,120	2,975	4,145
Total ...	38,657	2,37,105	2,75,762	2,34,995	40,767
Cantonment Funds—					
Alipore	202	2,590	2,792	2,664	128
Barrackpore	4,979	33,792	38,771	33,308	5,463
Cuttack	4,675	11,539	16,214	7,253	8,961
Dinapore	530	27,853	28,383	25,764	2,619
Ranchi (Dorunda)	93	3,475	3,568	2,472	1,096
Dum-Dum	1,309	17,465	18,774	17,317	1,457
Jalapahar	768	9,824	10,592	9,876	716
Lebong	727	7,926	8,653	6,429	2,224
Buxa Duars	110	2,315	2,425	2,307	118
Total ...	13,393	1,16,779	1,30,172	1,07,390	22,782
Chittagong Port Fund	4,557	1,33,543	1,38,100	78,027	60,073
GRAND TOTAL ...	4,99,857	10,03,051	15,02,908	8,91,552	6,11,356

There was a special expenditure of Rs. 11,196 from the Fire-Br Fund on the purchase of a fire-engine. The Jadu Nath Mukherjee's Fund ceased to exist in the year, as the whole balance was spent. There was a special receipt of Rs. 33,648 in the Pilgrims' Lodging-house Fund on account of the Bogla House donation in Puri. The charges also included the cost

of construction and the investment of Rs. 35,000. The charges of the Cuttack Anna Chatra Fund included two special items of Rs. 5,300 and Rs. 4,935; the former for investment in Government Promissory notes for the endowment of a female ward, and the latter for the construction of a new operating-room in connection with the Cuttack General Hospital. Rupees 2,000 was added to the invested capital of the Bengal Famine Orphan Fund. The Cantonment Hospital Fund was opened at Dinapore with effect from January 1904. The Chittagong General Hospital Fund received two special grants of Rs. 6,000 from Government for an outdoor dispensary and Rs. 5,000 from Babu Nemai Charan Das for a male ward in the

The receipts of the Khond Mahal Road Fund include a grant of Rs. 5,925 from the Provincial Revenues. A grant of one lakh was made in March 1904 from Imperial funds to the Zoological Garden Fund, but it was not credited in the accounts of the year. The Muhammadan Burial Board Fund received a grant of Rs. 1,697 from the Provincial Revenues. Special contributions were made by the Military Department to the following Cantonment Funds:—For general administration Buxa Duars Rs. 240 and Lebong Rs. 898; for conservancy Alipore Rs. 1,887, Buxa Duars, Rs. 1,972, Dinapore Rs. 1,500, Dum-Dum Rs. 3,000, Jalapahar Rs. 7,010 and Lebong Rs. 5,800; for hospitals and dispensaries Dinapore Rs. 2,500 and Jalapahar Rs. 2,000. There was an improvement in the financial condition of the Chittagong Port Fund owing to the imposition of river dues and to a general rise under the other heads of receipts. The balance of the *Gekko* loan, together with interest thereon, aggregating Rs. 89,230 was written off under the orders of the Government of India.

Road and Public Works Cesses.

[Report on the Road and Public Works Cess operations in the Lower Provinces for 1903-1904].

Rate, land revenue demand, and gross rental.

510. Both cesses were levied at the maximum rate of one anna in the rupee in the 43 districts in which the Cess Act, IX (B.C.) of 1880, is in force. The current demand of land revenue of those districts was Rs. 3,99,83,113 and the valuation or gross rental amounted to Rs. 17,84,24,533.

The total demand of both cesses for the year was Rs. 1,14,70,747: collections amounted to Rs. 97,68,192, or a percentage of 99·2 on the current demand. Remissions amounted to Rs. 76,434, leaving a balance of Rs. 17,12,989.

An increase of Rs. 2,47,533 in the current demand, as compared with that in 1902-1903, was mainly the result of revaluations in the several districts, of which Gaya and Shahabad contributed Rs. 29,504 and Rs. 15,100 respectively, Cuttack (in which the revaluation took effect from the commencement of the year under report), nearly Rs. 43,000 and Hazaribagh Rs. 10,049. With the increase in the demand, there was an increase in collections by Rs. 1,33,688, but the provincial percentage slightly decreased by 1·2. The arrear demand decreased by Rs. 41,914. Remissions were chiefly granted in the districts of Burdwan, Khulna, Gaya, Shahabad, Purnea, Balasore, Ranchi, Manbhum, and Singhbhum, and were due to the usual causes.

Districts are grouped in two classes—(*i*) those in which the collections attained the prescribed standard of 100 per cent. or more on the current demand, and (*ii*) those in which the collections were short of that standard.

Twenty-four districts fell under class (*i*), Singhbhum, Palamau, Puri, Bankura, and Manbhum attaining percentages above 105. There were 19 districts in which the percentages did not reach the standard.

Working of the certificate procedure.

511. The total number of certificates filed for the realization of cess arrears was 95,037, against 77,523 during the previous year. The increase, which was common to nearly all the Divisions, was most marked in those of Burdwan and Patna, while there was a decrease in the Rajshahi and Orissa Divisions. The cases disposed of exceeded the institutions in the Rajshahi, Dacca, Chittagong, Patna and Orissa Divisions.

Objections against certificates.

The total number of objections filed and disposed of was 6,525 and 6,359, against 8,210 and 7,808 respectively during the previous year. The number of cases cancelled on objection was 660, as compared with 756 in the preceding year, the withdrawal of certificates being due to the usual causes, such as the death and desertion of judgment-debtors, the exemption of lands lying within municipal limits, double assessments, the non-registration of the names of the holders of rent-free lands, errors in the Land Registration registers, and

wrong entries in the ledgers owing to the imperfect information supplied by the parties in *chalans*. The number of cases in which reductions were made in the amount certified declined from 1,032 to 432, as compared with the preceding year.

Stage of procedure at which demands were satisfied.

512. The mere issue of notices was sufficient to secure payment in 25,738 cases, as against 36,346 in the previous year, while in 33,369 cases, against 72,182, payments were made on the issue of notices for the sale of the defaulter's movable properties, and in 18,950 cases, against 23,194, on the issue of notices for the sale of immovable properties. In 2,732 cases recourse was had to actual sales before the demands were satisfied, out of which 1,158 were set aside under sections 20 and 21 of the Public Demands Recovery Act, I (B.C.) of 1895, as amended by Act I (B. C.) of 1899.

Valuations and revaluations.

513. Valuations or revaluations, partial or complete, were in progress or completed during the year in 29 out of the 44 districts (including the Sonthal Parganas) to which the Act applies.

During the year general revaluations were completed in the districts of Rajshahi, Gaya, Shahabad and Hazaribagh. In Rajshahi the revaluation led to an increase of Rs. 27,544, or 14·9 per cent. on the former cess demand. In Gaya the revaluation of 18 parganas resulted in an increase of Rs. 53,397, or 16·1 per cent., while in Shahabad the complete revaluation yielded an increase of Rs. 67,774, or 18·4 on the former assessment. In Hazaribagh the increase obtained by revaluation was Rs. 26,198, or 26·8 on the previous demand.

The revaluation proceedings of thanas Sudharam, Lakshmipur, Fenny, and portions of Chhagalnaia, and Companiganj in the district of Noakhali were completed during the year, and the revised assessment took effect from the 1st April 1904.

A general revaluation of the district of Champaran was sanctioned by Government so far back as February 1902, but the work could not be taken in hand for the want of an officer to supervise it. An officer has now been appointed to conduct it.

Separate accounts for revenue-paying and revenue-free estates.

514. There were 3,992 accounts opened during the year in revenue-paying estates, and they numbered 91,544 with a cess demand of Rs. 18,55,925 at the close of the year. For revenue-free estates 87 separate accounts were opened, the total number of such accounts at the close of the year being 1,356 with a cess demand of Rs. 47,319.

Estates and tenures assessed to cesses and their shareholders.

515. There was an increase of 6,312 in the number of revenue-paying estates, of 6,029 in revenue-free estates and of 4,858 in rent-free lands. The number of tenures assessed increased by 61,184. That of shareholders of estates and tenures also showed an increase of 40,286 and 75,353 respectively. The increase was due to the opening of separate accounts, partitions, the mutation of names, the addition of new estates, valuations and revaluations, and to the assessment of revenue-free estates and rent-free lands not previously assessed.

Gross rental.

516. The road cess was first assessed in 40 districts, the gross rental or valuation of which was Rs. 13,11,68,432. Subsequently the districts of Khulna and Palamau were created, and the Cess Act, IX (B. C.) of 1880, was extended to them and to parganas Dhalbhum and Porahat in Singhbhum. In the Sonthal Parganas into which the Act is being gradually introduced, the valuation of some recently resettled estates was completed, and the Board of Revenue have called on the local officers to propose a date from which the new cess demand should be levied. The gross rental rose to Rs. 17,84,20,533 during the year under report, showing an increase of Rs. 4,72,52,101 over the original valuation, and of Rs. 34,46,710 over that of the preceding year. The increase as compared with the past year was due to valuations and revaluations.

Miscellaneous.

517. During the year a specially qualified Deputy Collector was placed on deputation under the instructions of the Board of Revenue for the purpose of instituting enquiries into the methods of procedure followed in the revaluation offices of 12 districts where revaluation operations on an extensive scale were in progress.

Municipal Revenue.

See Chapter III—'Municipal Administration.'

CHAPTER VI—VITAL STATISTICS AND MEDICAL SERVICE.

Vital Statistics.

[Report of the Sanitary Commissioner, Bengal, for 1903; Judicial and Administrative Statistics of British India (Eleventh Issue) Section XIII.]

Provincial birth-and death-rates.

518. There was a decrease in the number of births registered from 2,987,800 in 1902 to 2,903,191 in 1903, and the ratio per mille fell from 40·14 to 39·00. This reduction is attributed by the Sanitary Commissioner to the general unhealthiness of the former year. The total mortality showed a slight diminution from 2,488,428 deaths in 1902 to 2,481,149 in 1903, in spite of an increase in deaths from plague and cholera by over 85,000. The year being a comparatively dry one, there was a decrease of 67,000 in deaths from fever.

Divisional results of registration.

519. As compared with the preceding year, the birth-rate during 1903 was higher only in the Orissa and Chota Nagpur Divisions and slightly so in Burdwan, and lower in the rest, the latter including the Presidency, Rajshahi and Dacca Divisions, which were more or less unhealthy during 1902. Five of the nine Divisions, viz., Chittagong, Patna, Bhagalpur, Orissa and Chota Nagpur, returned a birth-rate of over 40 per mille, Patna occupying first place with a ratio of 43·04. As regards deaths, the Chittagong, Patna, Bhagalpur and Orissa Divisions returned a higher rate than in 1902, owing mainly to the severe mortality from cholera in all of them and of plague as well in the Patna and Bhagalpur Divisions, the death-rate being lower in the other Divisions. Patna, with a ratio of 40·51 per mille, was the most unhealthy, and Chota Nagpur, which usually returns the lowest death-rate, was the healthiest of all the Divisions in the Province.

During the year 282,113 births and 209,616 deaths were enquired into by Inspectors and Sub-Inspectors of Vaccination: there was a considerable decrease in the numbers enquired into, due to the fact that vacancies in the posts of vaccination officers were kept vacant during the greater part of the year, pending final orders on the Vaccination Department reorganisation scheme now under the consideration of Government. Few cases of omission to register births or deaths were detected by these officers.

Infant Mortality.

520. Of the total number of births registered, 1,490,102 were of males and 1,413,089 of females; the proportion of males to females born being almost the same as in the preceding year. Of the former, 303,255, or 20·35 per cent., died within the first twelve months of their birth, while a considerably smaller number of the latter, viz., 261,624, or 18·51 per cent. of the females born, died during the same period; the corresponding ratios for the preceding year being 21·03 and 19·00, respectively. The slightly reduced death-rate is chiefly due to the comparatively better health of many districts during the year under report. As usual every district recorded larger male births than female births, as well as larger mortality among male infants than among female infants. In the districts the lowest death-rate among male infants was returned by Singhbhum and the highest by Jalpaiguri, the ratios being 12·95 and 29·84 per cent., respectively, while Ranchi, with a death-rate of 11·11 per cent., was the healthiest district for female infants and Balasore, which had a ratio of 28·67, the worst. Calcutta as usual maintained the unenviable notoriety of being the worst place for infant life, both male and female, and returned a mortality of 33·01 per cent. for the former and 29·97 per cent. for the latter, against 38·51 and 35·28 in the previous year.

Principal diseases.

521. The year was marked by a serious rise in the mortality from cholera over a greater portion of the Province. The total deaths amounted to 203,405, against 150,971 and 110,753 during the two preceding years; the mortality being higher than in any of the previous six years; except 1900, which is the blackest year on record in this respect. The district of Champaran was the worst sufferer from the disease, losing 7·69 per mille of its population. Very

heavy mortality also occurred in the districts of Puri, Shahabad, 24-Parganas and Cuttack. The intensity of the disease during the year is generally attributed to a late commencement of the monsoon, with a consequent serious pollution of the water-supply in most places. Disinfection of tanks and wells in the affected localities was often resorted to, and is reported to have been generally followed by beneficial results. The mortality from small-pox fell from 57,430 to 30,459. The incidence of the disease was lower in every Division of the Province except Bhagalpur. The deaths from fever also fell from 1,721,921 to 1,654,941, or 22·23 per mille. An officer of the Indian Medical Service was placed on special duty in December 1903 to conduct enquiries in the fever-stricken districts of Dinajpur and Purnea. With a view to the extension of the system of selling quinine in small packets to the public, Government directed during the year that the pice-packets of the drug sold through the agency of the Post-office after the 1st April 1904 should contain 7 instead of 5 grains. Instructions in the vernacular for self-treatment are now posted in conspicuous places in all post-offices and widely distributed. Fifty-six thousand six hundred and thirty-nine deaths were due to dysentery and diarrhœa. The number registered, though slightly smaller than in 1902, is still considerably higher than that of the past decade. Only 7,56[illegible] deaths were returned as due to respiratory diseases, but there can be no doubt that the Sanitary Commissioner is correct in thinking that deaths under this head are under-estimated.

Tuberculosis is shown by the jail returns and the common experience of hospitals to be far more prevalent than is supposed, and efforts are being made to educate the people as to the danger of infection. In all hospitals tuberculosis is now dealt with as an infectious disease, and patients suffering from it are isolated as much as possible—a measure the excellent effects of which are already apparent in jails. Plague is dealt with below.

Plague.

General.

522. The areas affected by plague during the year 1903 were the metropolitan districts of Hooghly, Howrah and the 24-Parganas and eight districts in Bihar. Elsewhere cases were only sporadic. The number of deaths from the disease was 65,680 as compared with 32,440 in 1902 and 78,580 in 1901. The number of seizures in 1903 was 74,269, against 38,920 in the previous year. No satisfactory explanation has been found for the fluctuations in the figures for the three years compared. One fact, however, seems clear, viz., that the disease has established itself firmly in the north-western part of the Province, while the eastern districts, whether owing to difference in soil, climate or habitation or in all three, remain free from its ravages.

Calcutta.

523. In Calcutta the total number of seizures and deaths during the year under report were 8,889 and 8,223 respectively, against 7,789 and 7,284 in 1902 and 8,616 and 7,884 in 1901. The outbreak developed in an active form during the week ending 24th January and ceased in the week ending 6th June. The epidemic of 1903 thus lasted 20 weeks, during which there were 8,396 attacks and 7,718 deaths, showing a case mortality of 91·9 per cent. The highest monthly mortality occurred from plague in March, when 3,526 deaths were recorded, but the disease reached its highest point in the week ending 4th April with 960 deaths. No change took place in the plague policy followed, and the principal measures adopted were the disinfection and demolition of plague-infected quarters. The latter measure has been vigorously carried out, and promises to be most useful not only in dealing with plague but also in improving the condition of insanitary areas. The people are reported to be well disposed not only towards disinfection but also towards the demolition of huts, there being an almost total absence of ill-feeling or opposition. There was no demand for inoculation.

In the interior.

524. In the interior the outbreak was far more severe than in 1902, as the mortality from plague rose from 25,156 in that year to 57,457 in the year under review. The bulk of the deaths was contributed by Saran (20,880), Patna (15,621), Shahabad (7,311), Monghyr (4,644), Darbhanga (3,953) and Muzaffarpur (2,928). The highest point was in almost all cases touched in the end of March after which the decline began. There was a break of greater or less

duration in all the above districts except Saran, which remained infected throughout the year. Towards the close of the year all these districts were suffering from a recrudescence of the disease, which in the case of Patna and Shahabad had attained wider proportions than at the beginning of the year. The measures adopted to deal with plague were as usual evacuation and disinfection. In rural areas the only efficient check is evacuation, and the people are year by year becoming more ready to adopt it themselves. In March 1903 instructions were issued for the desiccation of plague-infected rooms by burning cowdung cakes on the floors. It is reported that many families followed the instructions given.

Observation camps, etc.

525. There were no plague observation camps on the lines of rail in this Province except one at Siliguri. Seventy-three thousand nine hundred and seventy-four persons were examined during the year by the Inspecting Medical Officer, but no case of plague was detected.

Examination of the crews and passengers of ships arriving by sea in the port of Calcutta and of those leaving it for ports out of India, or for ports in the Madras and Bombay Presidencies or in Burma, is conducted in accordance with the orders contained in Government Notification No. 36Marine, dated 18th March 1901, and Plague Regulation No. 14, dated 25th April 1899, respectively. With regard to the latter, certain precautions were suggested by the Health Officer of the Port as well as by the Assistant Surgeon deputed by the Government of the United States to inspect the ships bound for ports in those States, with the object of preventing the ingress or egress of plague-infected rats to and from ships moored to the docks and jetties. These were adopted in December 1903.

As in previous years, a camp was formed at Chittagong in October 1903 for the reception and despatch of pilgrims intending to proceed to Mecca. Only 23 pilgrims, however, sought admission to the camp; and as the Chittagong route appeared so unpopular, the camp was, with the approval of the Government of India, finally abolished.

Emigration.

COLONIAL EMIGRATION.

[Report on Emigration from the Port of Calcutta to British and Foreign Colonies for 1903: Financial and Commercial Statistics of British India—Section XXXV (Eleventh Issue) Emigration.]

Administrative measures.

526. The most important measure undertaken during the year under review was the framing of rules under Act X of 1902. This Act, which became law at the end of the year 1902, makes provision for the departure by sea out of India of natives of India for the purpose of working as artisans, or of any entertainment or exhibition, or of service in any restaurant, tea-house or other place of public resort. Rules regulating the engagement of such persons for the purposes indicated above were framed during the year under review, and were finally sanctioned by the Governor-General in Council on the 9th March 1904.

Requisition and despatch of labour.

527. The number of Agencies recruiting emigrants was one less than in the previous year; the Agency for the Dutch Colony of Surinam, which despatched 1,254 emigrants during the previous year, having suspended operations during the year under review. The demand and supply of labour for the British Colonies were very nearly the same as in the previous year; the total number of adult labourers requisitioned and supplied during the year 1903 amounting to 9,893 and 8,794, as against 9,830 and 9,240 respectively in the year 1902. No emigrants were despatched to the Colony of Mauritius during the year, owing to the fact that arrangements could not be made to secure a vessel for the purpose before the close of the year.

The number of emigrants registered was 12,403 as against 13,807 in the year 1902, the decrease being attributed to the general prosperity of the agricultural classes during the year under review. As usual the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh contributed the largest number of emigrants, nearly 62 *per cent.* of the total number of labourers registered being recruited in those Provinces.

Depots.

528. Of 12,612 emigrants who were received in the sub-depôts, 10,787 actually arrived in Calcutta; and, if emigrants who were received in the previous year, those who were readmitted from hospitals after recovery, and infants born during the year be added to these, the total number accommodated in the depôts in Calcutta was 11,161 as against 13,329 in the year 1902. The percentage of deaths (·26) in the depôts was much smaller than in the preceding year, a satisfactory feature of the year being the noticeable decrease in the number of cases of cerebro-spinal meningitis.

The percentage of rejections at the depôts was 8·01 as against 7·44 in the preceding year. The Protector observes that the increase in the percentage is chiefly attributable to stricter medical examination of emigrants in the depôts before embarkation, but that it may also point to the fact that the medical examination of emigrants at the sub-depôts was not performed with sufficient care. The latter question, it may be observed, is one with which Government is only partially concerned. As noticed in paragraph 2 of this Government's letter No. 158T.—G., dated the 13th May 1901, to the Government of India, the Emigration Agents make their own arrangements for the examination of emigrants; and it is only when Government officers are employed by them, and subsequent events show that the examination made by such officers has been perfunctory, that Government is called upon to interfere. No such complaints were brought to notice during the year under review.

Embarkation of emigrants.

529. The number of emigrants who embarked for the Colonies during the year was 9,084, or 1,798 less than in 1902, the largest number (2,937) being despatched to Demerara. The number of returned emigrants who re-engaged was 378 as against 435 in the previous year.

Returned emigrants and remittances from immigrants in the Colonies.

530. During the year 4,686 immigrants returned from the Colonies with aggregate savings amounting to Rs. 7,81,643-13-8, the average for each immigrant amounting to Rs. 166-12-10. On the other hand, as many as 1,050 adults, or 22·40 *per cent.* of the total number of returned emigrants, brought back no savings.

As in the previous year, the largest remittances by money-order came from the resident immigrants of Natal, the total sum so sent amounting to over 15 lakhs. In the Mauritius the comparative smallness of the remittances is reported to be due to the fact that Indian emigrants settle there permanently with their families, and thus have no occasion to remit money to India.

EMIGRATION TO BURMA.

531. The number of State emigrants carried from Bihar to Burma during the year under report was 457 (367 adults and 90 children), against 797 in the previous year. The great falling off in the number of emigrants year after year is attributed to the virulence of the plague in the Bihar districts generally.

The emigrants are carried to Burma at reduced rates by the British India Steam Navigation Company, and one-third of the passage-money is paid as a subsidy in equal shares by the Governments of Bengal and Burma.

Inland Emigration.

[The reports on Inland Emigration for the year ending the 30th June 1904, submitted by the Superintendents of Emigration, Calcutta, the Sonthal Parganas, Hazaribagh, Ranchi and Palamau, and Manbhum and Singhbhum.]

Administration.

532. An important event of the year in connection with the working of Act VI of 1901 was the issue by the Government of India of their letter No. 1950—19-5, dated the 2nd November 1903, in which that Government, in replying to a representation made by the Indian Tea Association regarding the recruitment of labourers for Assam, enunciated the general policy which should be followed in the administration of the Act. This letter was circulated to all District Officers, Superintendents of Emigration and Registering Officers, with directions that the orders therein passed should be very carefully observed.

One of the most important matters which engaged the attention of Government during the year was the question whether employers of labour and their representatives can legally supervise recruiting operations in areas

notified under section 3 of the Act. With regard to the latter class of persons, it was held that, if duly appointed as agents by employers, *i.e.*, by persons in actual charge of gardens, they can do no more than sign contracts on behalf of their employers under section 45 of the Act, or supervise the work of Local or Selecting Agents by inspecting their offices and in other ways. They cannot, however, it was decided, take any part in the recruiting of emigrants, nor supervise the work of actual recruiting, nor in any way engage, induce or assist any person to emigrate without taking out licenses under the Act. As regards employers, it was held that, although under the law they are debarred from personally recruiting emigrants, they can supervise, without taking out licenses, the work of garden-sardars in all matters connected with recruitment and also assist in the work of recruitment by interviewing emigrants and giving them advances. It was subsequently arranged with the Indian Tea Association and the Tea Districts Labour Supply Association that employers should, on arrival in a recruiting district, report themselves to the District Officer before commencing work in the manner indicated, so that that officer might be in a position to satisfy himself that such persons are *bonâ-fide* employers, and know what unlicensed persons are in his district supervising the work of garden-sardars.

It having been brought to the notice of Government that several persons belonging to distant districts had been registered as emigrants under Act VI of 1901 and placed on contract in Calcutta, Superintendents of Emigration were informed that this was not only contrary to the spirit of the Act, but also defeated one of the chief objects for which it was passed, viz., that the initial registration of an emigrant should be effected near his home.

It was explained that if it appeared that an intending emigrant had been resident in the district of recruitment for some time before he is presented for registration, there would be *primâ facie* no ground for suspecting that any improper procedure had been adopted in connection with his recruitment, but that if, on the other hand, it appeared that an intending emigrant had recently arrived in such district, a presumption would ordinarily arise that his recruitment had not been legitimately effected, and a careful enquiry would be necessary.

With the object of shortening the journey to the Brahmaputra Valley, the railway route *viâ* Saraghat, Parbatipur and Dhubri, which was previously open only to emigrants from districts north of the Ganges and Gogra rivers and from the Sonthal Parganas, was, on the recommendation of the Hon'ble the Chief Commissioner of Assam, prescribed as an alternative route for all emigrants proceeding to the valley in question.

In order to effect economies in respect of the Inland Labour Transport Fund, expenditure was retrenched in various ways during the year; the most important measure taken in this direction being the decision not to employ a Travelling Superintendent of Emigration throughout the year, but only during the months (October to March) in which emigration is active.

533. In all 22,322 emigrants were despatched to the labour districts as against 27,589 during the previous year, the decline being attributed chiefly to the general agricultural prosperity which prevailed during the year under review. Of the total number so despatched, 10,814 were recruited and registered in Bengal, and the remaining 11,508 in Madras and the Central Provinces. Of the total number of emigrants, 7,003, or 31·3 *per cent.*, were recruited by licensed recruiters; 8,037, or 36 *per cent.*, by garden-sardars working under Chapter IV of the Act; and 541, or 2·4 *per cent.*, by specially employed garden-sardars working under sections 90 and 91 of Chapter V of the Act; while 6,741, or 30 *per cent.*, proceeded to the labour districts under the provisions of section 92 of the Act. During the year under review there was again a very noticeable decrease in the number of emigrants recruited by garden-sardars, the number of emigrants so recruited being 6,568, or 43·3 *per cent.*, less than in the previous year; while there was a considerable increase, viz., 1,726, or 34·4 *per cent.*, in the number recruited under section 92 of the Act. Number of emigrants.

Immigration.

534. The usual emigration from Burdwan and Midnapore in search of work during the cold season is said to have been on a large scale. In Hooghly and

Burdwan, the influx of Sonthals and other aboriginal coolies from Midnapore, Bankura, and the Chota Nagpur districts continued. A large number of up-country coolies came, as usual, to work on the railway in Rungpur and Bogra, and at the jute presses in the eastern districts. Some people from Tippera emigrated either permanently or temporarily to Hill Tippera, where they reclaimed lands on easy terms. A large number of labourers from Noakhali go to Backergunge every year to harvest paddy, and to Burma and Calcutta to serve on steamers or for trade. A considerable number of poor cultivators from the northern districts of the Patna Division, especially from Saran, go to Bengal and Assam every year in search of employment. Labourers from Orissa go freely to Calcutta and other places.

Medical Institutions.

[Annual returns of the Medical Institutions in Bengal for 1903, and the notes thereon of the Inspector-General of Civil Hospitals; Judicial and Administrative Statistics of British India—Section XIV.]

CALCUTTA MEDICAL INSTITUTIONS.

Number of Institutions, Attendance, etc.

535. There were 17 public hospitals and dispensaries in Calcutta, as in the previous year. At these 27,178 indoor and 260,910 outdoor patients were treated as compared with 29,063 and 260,769 respectively in 1902. The total number of patients treated was 1,744 less than in the previous year, but it is satisfactory to note that the attendance of women increased by 1,617, and was the largest on record for the last 11 years. The decrease in the number of indoor patients was fairly general, having occurred at 9 out of the 12 institutions where this class of patients is received. The cause was evidently an improvement in the public health of Calcutta and its suburbs during the year under review, the death-rate having declined from 37·04 per mille in 1902 to 35·1, whilst in Howrah the improvement was still more marked, the mortality there being 41·20 per mille, against 47·43 in 1902. In three hospitals a small increase in the indoor attendance occurred, viz., in the Presidency General Hospital, the Shama Charan Law Ophthalmic Hospital and the Dufferin Victoria Hospital. Two of these at least are rapidly growing in popularity. The outdoor attendance, which may be taken as a good index of the popularity of a hospital, was slightly larger than that during the previous year. The variations in the numbers treated as compared with the returns for 1902 were small: the most noteworthy being a decrease of 881 in the Campbell Hospital, where the attendance fluctuates more than in any other with the state of the public health. On the other hand, an increase of 622 occurred in the attendance at the Shama Charan Law Ophthalmic Hospital, where the new outdoor department is much appreciated by the public.

Diseases treated.

536. The statistics for the year furnish further evidence of the improvement in the public health, seeing that there was a marked decrease in the number of cases of malarial fever dealt with. The admissions under this head declined from 49,504, the figure for 1902, to 44,962. Diseases of the zymotic group were also less frequent, the admissions on account of cholera, small-pox, plague, enteric fever and cerebro-spinal fever having all diminished. Venereal diseases being independent of climate show an increase of 1,244 admissions over the numbers in 1902 and 1,490 as compared with the returns for 1901. The statistics of the Voluntary Venereal Hospital, Alipore, are included in these figures. Dysentery and diarrhœa caused 15,519 admissions.

Operations.

537. The record of surgical work done in the hospitals during the year is a fairly satisfactory one, the total number of operations performed having risen from 28,385 in 1902 to 29,475. The increase occurred chiefly at the Medical College Hospital. A large number of the operations performed were, however, of minor importance, 10,160 being extractions of teeth.

Financial.

538. The total *income* of the hospitals was Rs. 9,59,759, against Rs. 12,23,967 in the previous year; the decrease occurring almost entirely under the head "Special allowances from Government," which in 1902 included a large sum allotted for building operations in the Presidency General Hospital.

Receipts from paying patients amounted to Rs. 83,739 as compared with Rs. 78,699 in 1902, the increase occurring chiefly at the Presidency General

Hospital, where the income from this source exceeded that during the previous year by Rs. 5,554. Private subscriptions were received in three hospitals only, viz., the Mayo institutions (Rs. 6,566), the Sambhu Nath Pandit Hospital (Rs. 35) and the Howrah General Hospital (Rs. 9,172). In the case of the last-mentioned hospital the sums paid by private firms in support of their employés whilst sick are included in the total. It can scarcely be said that the Calcutta public contribute generously towards the support of the hospitals. The total *expenditure*, excluding investments during the year, amounted to Rs. 9,27,093, against Rs. 11,87,488 in 1902, the decrease being, as already noted, the result of a smaller expenditure on buildings during the year. The percentage of the total outlay borne by Government during 1903 was 69·57, against 76·65 in 1902.

539. The condition of the principal hospitals at present is one of transition; much having been done towards bringing them up to modern standards, whilst much remains to be done. The Presidency General Hospital, with the exception of its wards for paying-patients, which are about to be rebuilt, is an efficient modern institution, well designed and equipped. The Medical College Hospital is also undergoing a process of development and modernization which had become urgently necessary. During the past year arrangements were completed for the addition of a surgical ward of 80 beds with all modern improvements. Nurses' quarters are also to be provided, and much-needed improvements in the main building have been arranged for, so that this hospital will soon be worthy of its position as a great teaching institution and the principal means of affording medical relief to the native population of Calcutta. Of the other institutions, the Campbell Hospital and the Howrah General Hospital are still much behind the times in accommodation and equipment, but arrangements have been made for their improvement, and it is hoped that they will soon be placed in a satisfactory state of efficiency. General.

CHARITABLE DISPENSARIES IN THE MUFUSSAL.

540. At the commencement of the year under review there were 574 hospitals and dispensaries in operation, excluding the Calcutta institutions. During the year 29 new dispensaries were opened, 2 were closed and 4 were withdrawn from Government supervision, the total number open at the close of the year being 597. The total number of patients treated during the year was 4,411,355 as compared with 4,162,776 in 1902, an increase of 248,579, whilst the daily average attendance increased by 595·21 as compared with the returns for that year. These figures include only the patients treated in charitable dispensaries under Government supervision, but in addition 356,678 were treated in private dispensaries from which returns have been received: 169,569 in Railway Hospitals, 8,427 by travelling railway medical officers and 16,397 in temporary hospitals connected with outbreaks of epidemic diseases, so that altogether 4,962,426 persons received medical relief in this way as compared with 4,607,356 in the previous year. Although there was a general increase in the attendance, the number of in-patients decreased by 1,564 as compared with the figures for the preceding year. This decrease was confined to the hospitals in 28 districts, and was due to a combination of causes, amongst which were an improvement in the public health, the prevalence of plague in most of the Bihar districts and the retrograde policy adopted by the Hospital Committees in some places, notably Patna, of reducing for economical reasons the number of beds available. The number treated in 1902 was exceptionally large, being exceeded only once during the previous ten years. In view of the fact that the year 1903 was healthier than its predecessor, the returns indicate that the dispensaries have gained in popularity. The attendance of women at the dispensaries, although slightly larger than in the preceding year, is still considerably behind that in some other Provinces, notably Madras, the United Provinces and the Punjab, where the percentages of women in the total daily attendance during 1902 were 23·89, 22·59 and 20·97 respectively as compared with 17·88 in Bengal. A great deal has recently been done towards improving the accommodation for female patients, and arrangements securing their privacy are now provided in the great majority of institutions. In many of the larger hospitals female patients are treated in separate buildings by female Number of institutions, attendance, etc.

medical officers, so that the difficulty is probably one of class, caste, and custom rather than of accommodation.

541. The floating dispensary established in the Faridpur district in 1902 is continuing to do good work and is an undoubted advance: the example might well be followed in some of the other water-logged districts. Medicine chests have been supplied to the headmen of outlying villages in a few districts, but it is doubtful whether much benefit results. On the other hand the visits of dispensary medical officers to local markets and fairs have been found useful in a number of instances and are undoubtedly desirable in the remoter districts, such as the Chittagong Hill Tracts.

Diseases treated.

542. Malarial fevers caused 731,740 admissions during the year, or 28,205 fewer than in 1902. The decrease was probably the result of the climatic conditions of the year, and corresponds closely with the general mortality returns of the Province, which show a diminution of 66,256 in the total number of deaths ascribed to "fever." Cholera and bowel-complaints were, on the other hand, more frequently met with in the dispensaries. As in former years diseases of the skin caused the largest number of admissions, being responsible for 20·37 per cent. of the total number. Malarial fevers coming next in frequency with 16·59 per cent. It is noteworthy that although dysentery and diarrhœa caused 207,672 admissions to hospital, the total mortality from these diseases throughout the Province is reported as 53,962 only, viz., the admissions exceed the entire mortality very largely; on the other hand, whilst 201,415 deaths from cholera are reported, only 15,882 admissions were registered under this head in the dispensaries. These figures throw some doubt on the accuracy of the cholera mortality returns, although the explanation probably lies in the fact that in cases of cholera there is often no time to apply at the dispensaries for treatment.

Operations.

543. The total number of surgical operations performed in the dispensaries during the year was 184,420 as compared with 171,647 in 1902, an increase of 12,773. Whilst from a numerical point of view this result is satisfactory, an examination of the returns shows that there was a decided falling off in the number of some of the more important operations performed. In connection with this subject the Inspector-General of Civil Hospitals observes that the surgical equipment of a considerable number of the hospitals is defective, and that in the past medical officers have had many serious difficulties to contend with, which have undoubtedly interfered seriously with efficient surgical treatment. Improvements in this direction, however, are being strenuously pushed forward in almost all the more important hospitals, and whilst already much has been accomplished, there is every reason to hope that in the near future the old order of things will have disappeared, and that the hospitals will be rendered thoroughly efficient in this respect.

Financial

544. The net *income* for the year was Rs. 13,61,520, against Rs. 11,79,284 in the previous year, an increase of Rs. 1,82,236. This, however, is principally due to the inclusion of a sum of Rs. 1,27,000 spent on the construction of a new hospital at Hathwa by Her Highness the Maharani. Subscriptions and donations from natives increased by Rs. 1,42,212, whilst those from Europeans diminished by Rs. 3,793. During the past year much active sympathy with the work of the hospitals has been shown by native gentlemen in the form of large contributions towards their improvement. Municipalities and District Boards contributed a slightly larger amount towards the support of dispensaries than in 1902. The sums paid by Municipalities towards medical purposes vary widely in the proportion they bear to the total Municipal expenditure. Amongst District Boards the proportion of income expended on medical charity and sanitation also varies widely, but the general average is much below that of the municipalities.

The total net *expenditure* for the year amounted to Rs. 13,36,233, against Rs. 11,10,258 in 1902, the increase of 2,25,975 being chiefly due to a large outlay on buildings (Rs. 3,66,091 against Rs. 1,51,834 in 1902). European drugs cost Rs. 1,98,617 as compared with Rs. 1,89,414 in the previous year. The Inspector-General of Civil Hospitals thinks it possible that febrifuges and possibly other drugs are not supplied as liberally as is to be desired and has called the attention of Civil Surgeons to the matter. Diet of patients cost Rs. 7,560 less than in the previous year—a result due, no doubt, mainly to the

fact that in-door patients were less numerous. Although a large proportion of the in-door patients are quite unable to contribute anything towards their own support in hospital, it seems evident that little effort is made to induce those who can afford it to do so. In this connection the Inspector-General of Civil Hospitals remarks that it is undesirable to pauperize the patients and to convert the hospitals into alms-houses in this way, for the hospitals certainly suffer in reputation in consequence. A good indication of the estimation in which a hospital is held by the people is the number of patients who are willing to come to it and pay for their diet whilst under treatment. Civil Surgeons have been addressed on the subject of requiring patients who can afford to pay for their diet while under treatment to do so.

Eden Sanitarium, Darjeeling.

[Report on the working of the Eden Sanitarium and Hospital for the year 1903.]

545. The total number of admissions to the institution during the year was 491, of whom 149 were relatives and friends. The total number of persons treated during the year was therefore 342, and 300 of these were cured, while 35 were relieved and 5 died. Ninety of the patients were treated in the hospital section, of whom 50 were operated on, with the result that 45 were entirely cured, 3 were relieved, and 1 died.

There was a marked improvement in the financial position of the institution during the year. The total income was Rs. 49,972 as compared with Rs. 43,910 in 1902, and there was a profit on the year's working of Rs. 3,464.

Lunatic Asylums.

[Annual Statistical Returns with brief notes on Lunatic Asylums in Bengal for 1903; Judicial and Administrative Statistics of British India, Section XV.]

546. The number of lunatics in the six asylums of the Province at the beginning of the year was 1,033. During the year 315 were admitted, 197 were discharged, and 106 died, the total population at the end of the year being 1,045. The total number of lunatics who came under treatment during the year was 1,348, the highest on record. The Inspector-General of Civil Hospitals suggests as the reason for the increase that lunatics are brought into the asylums more frequently and freely than in former years. The increase between the years referred to by him is, however, not greater than is accounted for by the increase in the total population of the Province. Of the total number confined, 706 were criminal lunatics. The death-rate was 7·8 per cent., which, while it is below the previous year's figure, is higher than in some other Provinces. The explanation, no doubt, is that the total capacity of the asylums in Bengal is smaller in proportion to the total population of the Province than that provided elsewhere; for when only a smaller proportion of the lunatics can be treated, preference must be given to the worst cases, and among these naturally there is a larger mortality. Amongst the varieties of insanity met with in the asylums, mania heads the list with 60 per cent. of the total number of cases. In 727 cases the cause of insanity could not be traced. As in former years, intoxicants are credited with a large proportion of the cases, ganja and alcohol being the forms most frequently mentioned. The total expenditure amounted to Rs. 1,36,765, the average cost per lunatic being Rs. 129-12-6. The most serious item in expenditure was the cost of diet, which amounted to Rs. 50,288. This has increased considerably more in recent years than either the rise in prices or the larger average population appears to account for. The expenditure under this head is, however, less than in the previous year, and it is satisfactory to note that the average cost of a patient in Bengal is considerably below that of patients in the asylums of most other Provinces. The profits on manufactures during the year show a considerable decrease.

It is undeniable that the arrangements at the asylums are in many respects far below the standard of the present day. Especially is this the case in Bhowanipur, where the patients are shut in, and where their surroundings are not conducive to successful treatment. At other asylums also, although more space is available, there is an absence of the skilled supervision which can

only be obtained by the continuous presence of a highly trained specialist. To render it possible to provide such treatment at a reasonable cost concentration of these asylums is necessary, and such a measure has become practicable owing to the fact that almost all districts are now accessible by railways. The arrangements for carrying out this reform are already far advanced in the case of native lunatics; and it is hoped that it may be found feasible to carry out a similar reform in the case of European lunatics. The matter is receiving earnest attention.

Sanitation.

[Report of the Sanitary Commissioner, Bengal, for 1903-1904.]

547. The expenditure on sanitary purposes by Municipalities and District Boards has been detailed in the Chapters on Municipal Administration and Local Self-Government.

The subject of the improvement of the sources of village water-supply attracted the attention of the Lieutenant-Governor almost immediately on his arrival in the Province. It is, however, the quality rather than the quantity of water that is in fault; for the voluminous correspondence on the subject contains evidence that a deficiency of the quantity of water available for drinking purposes in villages is altogether exceptional. The local officers have accordingly been requested to direct their efforts chiefly to improving the sources of supply and removing the causes of contamination; and a promise has been given that if in any case the local authorities will contribute one-third of the cost, and the public another third, the Government will contribute the remaining third up to a limit of Rs. 5,000 for any one district, and of Rs. 50,000 for the whole Province. These conditions have been imposed so that the gifts of Government may take a form which will encourage the villagers to help themselves, and which will foster a spirit of co-operation between the Government and the people.

The difficulties connected with the installation of septic tanks have come prominently into notice during the year under review. The interests involved are very great, namely, those of the public, those of the mill-owners, who have sunk large sums of money in these installations, and not least those of the various municipalities scattered throughout the mufassal; for if the system can be made thoroughly efficient and unobjectionable, one of the most difficult problems of Municipal Administration will be solved. A small committee, under the presidency of the Inspector-General of Civil Hospitals, was appointed to enquire into and report on this question with special reference to existing installations.

During the year a circular was issued to all Commissioners of Divisions drawing their attention to the insanitary condition of bazars in the vicinity of railway settlements, and suggesting measures for their improvement and for the prevention of the growth of similar conditions in future. Copies were also forwarded to various Consulting Engineers to the Government of India for Railways, who were asked to invite the co-operation of the Railway authorities in the endeavours of local officers to deal with the question.

The Sanitary Board held four meetings during the year. The principal subjects of discussion were the efficiency of the septic tank system of sewage disposal and the supply of filtered water to the riparian Municipalities from the mills located within their jurisdiction. Preliminary estimates for a scheme for supplying filtered water to the Barisal Municipality at a cost of Rs. 1,26,000 and for the remodelling of the Dacca water-works at a cost of Rs. 3,60,000 were prepared under the orders of the Board during the year. The Board were also consulted in regard to several water-works and drainage schemes.

Vaccination.

[Annual Statistical Returns and short notes on Vaccination in Bengal for 1903-1904; Judicial and Administrative Statistics of British India, Section XVI.]

548. There was an increase of five in the number of Inspectors employed in the Calcutta Municipality during the year: the strength of the staff

Chap. VI. VITAL STATISTICS AND MEDICAL SERVICE.

employed in the mufassal practically underwent no change. Proposals for reorganising the Department are now under consideration by Government. The total number of operations performed during the year was 2,748,638, of which 2,634,563 were primary and 114,075 re-vaccination. There was a falling off of 75,720 in the latter, due to less prevalence of small-pox, and a consequent decreased demand for re-vaccination in connection with the stamping out of small-pox epidemics. Of the primary operations, 212,537 were performed with calf lymph, 415,310 with lanoline lymph, and 2,006,716 by the arm-to-arm process. The ratio of success in primary and re-vaccination operations was, respectively, 98·19 and 66·40. The average number of operations performed by each vaccinator was 961. The number of operations performed in the Calcutta Municipality rose from 16,303 to 18,352. In mufassal municipalities, dispensaries, etc., the number of operations fell from 132,831 to 128,945. Out of 2,440,676 the estimated number of infants under one year available for vaccination, 877,810, or 359·66 per thousand, were successfully vaccinated. In 15 districts the protection afforded was over 500 per mille, while in 8 districts it was below 200 per mille. In municipalities 711 per mille of the surviving infant population were protected. In factories and tea gardens, with a total population of 225,193, 11,913 operations were performed. The total cost of vaccination during the year was Rs. 2,03,282, and the average cost of each successful case of vaccination was 1 anna and 3 pies. During the year the Superintendent of the Tributary Mahals of Orissa was addressed with a view to the improvement of vaccination in those States. He was asked to endeavour to enlist the co-operation of the Chiefs concerned in the improvement of vaccination in the several States, and to submit schemes for better supervision and inspection. At the close of the year a Civil Hospital Assistant was appointed as a Sub-Inspector of Vaccination to supervise vaccination work in the Dhenkanal State.

CHAPTER VII.—INSTRUCTION.

General System of Public Instruction.

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION REPORT FOR 1901-1902, PART II, PAGES 305-314.

Education.

[Report on Public Instruction in Bengal for the year 1903-1904; Judicial and Administrative Statistics of British India; Section X.]

General.

549. Among various measures of improvement carried out during the year under review, the following deserve special mention on account of their far-reaching importance:—

(1) the opening of training classes for Hindu and Muhammadan widows and school-masters' wives so as to enable them to become teachers in girls' schools on the lines of a well-established system in force in the Madras Presidency;
(2) the extension of the system of appointing zanana teachers for women and girls of respectable family and position who by the custom of the country do not appear in public;
(3) the steps taken to improve the training schools for teachers of primary schools and to increase the number of such schools; and
(4) the preparation of a comprehensive scheme for developing and making grants-in-aid to the indigenous Muhammadan primary schools which exist throughout the Province.

The following table summarises the statistics of all classes of educational institutions for the year:—

Class of Institution.	Schools.	Pupils.	Average number of pupils per school.
Public Institutions—			
University ... Arts Colleges ...	46	8,009	174·1
Secondary (for males) High English Schools	565	124,562	220·4
Secondary (for males) Middle " "	1,016	76,308	75·1
Secondary (for males) " Vernacular "	884	51,106	57·8
Primary (for males) Upper Primary "	4,851	215,928	44·5
Primary (for males) Lower " "	44,249	1,176,398	26·5
Special (including Madrasahs and institutions for professional training).	896	23,960	26·7
Female (Secondary and Primary)	4,731	100,994	21·3
Total ...	57,238	1,777,265	31·0
Private Institutions—			
(1) Advanced, teaching (a) Arabic or Persian ...	1,118	17,336	15·5
(1) Advanced, teaching (b) Sanskrit ...	974	8,370	8·5
(2) Elementary, teaching a Vernacular only or mainly.	3,159	31,799	10·0
(3) Elementary, teaching the Koran only ...	3,394	53,220	15·6
(4) Other schools not conforming to departmental standards.	217	4,884	23·5
Total ...	8,862	115,609	13·0
Grand Total ...	66,100	1,892,874	28·6

During the year under review there was an increase of 3·8 *per cent.* in the total number of educational institutions of all kinds and of 7·9 *per cent.* in the total number of pupils, the increase in the previous year having been

2·9 and 5·2, respectively. High and middle English schools and pupils both increased. Although there was a further decline in the number of middle vernacular schools, there was a slight increase in the number of pupils attending schools of this class. The expansion of primary schools was well maintained during the year, the number of such institutions having risen by 3·5 *per cent.* and the number of pupils by 8·2 *per cent.* There is still, however, only one school for every three villages in the Province, and the need for further development is year by year more keenly felt.

The total expenditure on education during the year was Rs. 1,38,65,410 as compared with Rs. 1,35,46,783 in the preceding year. As in the previous year, expenditure from Provincial Revenues and District Funds increased. The rate of increase in the case of the former was almost the same as in the previous year. It was chiefly due to larger grants for educational reforms, which were commenced two years ago. The proportion of the expenditure from fees increased by 0·7 *per cent.*, but that from other private sources decreased by 2·4 *per cent.* The two private sources contributed between them 63·3 *per cent.* of the total cost. The total cost of each pupil in primary schools was Rs. 2-13-4, and in secondary schools Rs. 16-15-10.

The chief change made during the year in the superior staff was the appointment of a lady of high qualifications and training as Inspectress of Girls' Schools in the Province.

Collegiate education.

550. The number of Arts Colleges was 46 as against 45 in the previous year; while the total number of students remained practically the same.

The average cost of educating a student in a Government College was Rs. 218-1-4, of which Rs. 121-10-10 were paid from State Revenues. There was again a decrease in the number of students who appeared at the F.A. Examination, amounting to 177, or nearly 5 *per cent.* On the other hand, the percentage of successes rose by 2·7 as against a decline in the year 1902-1903 of 15·9. The total number of candidates for the B.A. Examination was 1,898 as against 1,711 in the previous year, of whom 284 were successful as compared with 357 in 1902-1903. Altogether 14 candidates presented themselves for the B.Sc. Examination, of whom 5 only were successful. At the M.A. Examination 200 candidates appeared as against 190 in the previous year; and of these, 70, the same number as in the previous year, succeeded in passing the examination.

The results of the University Examinations were generally unsatisfactory, but those of the B.A. Examination were extraordinarily bad. This failure is said to be partly due to the fact that the candidates sent up from many Colleges in the year under review were not up to the standard of previous years; but it is also probable that the tests for passing these examinations, which have been generally recognised as undesirably low, have been raised by the examiners.

Towards the close of the year under review it was decided to remove the Dacca College from its present position in the city to an open site on the outskirts of Dacca. The new buildings will include houses for the Principal of the College and some of the professors, and hostels for a considerable proportion of the students. Good progress has already been made with this scheme.

The number of institutions teaching law decreased by one, but the attendance at them showed a slight increase. There was a very large decrease in the number of successful candidates at the B.L. Examination.

The number of pupils on the rolls of the Medical College was 519. The total expenditure on the College was Rs. 2,28,430, of which Provincial Revenues contributed Rs. 1,94,000. The four Government vernacular medical schools were attended by 741 pupils: the expenditure on them amounted to Rs. 1,05,183.

The amount provided in the budget estimates for the encouragement of Sanskrit learning was Rs. 24,000. The most notable feature in connection with higher Sanskrit education during the year was the opening of classes in the Sanskrit College, Calcutta, for the teaching of the abstruse subjects of Nyâyâ (Logic), Smriti (Hindu Law), and Vedântā (Hindu Philosophy).

Two hundred and eighty-seven candidates presented themselves at the Sanskrit Title Examination, of whom 12 passed in the first Division and 94 in the second.

Secondary education.

551. The number of secondary schools for Indian boys was 2,442 as against 2,441 in the year 1902-1903. Middle vernacular schools declined by 46, while high English and middle English schools increased by 11 and 36, respectively. As noticed in paragraph 529 of last year's Report, the tendency is to convert middle vernacular schools into middle English schools and to develop the latter in their turn into high English schools.

Altogether 5,971 candidates were sent up for the Entrance examination as against 5,623 in the year 1902-1903; while the number of successful candidates was only 2,351 (39·3 *per cent.*), as compared with 2,622 (46·6 *per cent.*) in that year. These results are, as the Director observes, extremely disappointing; and an examination of the figures of recent years shows that the process of deterioration has been proceeding steadily for several years past, and that it has affected Government schools as well as aided and private schools. More candidates are now sent up than in previous years, but the number of successful candidates is considerably less. The Director of Public Instruction observes that as the gentlemen who conduct the Entrance examination are generally the same from year to year, these figures tend to show that the teaching in high schools is deteriorating, or that there is an increasing tendency to send up boys who are insufficiently prepared or are too young. It is hoped that one of the results of the Universities Act will be that pupils will be better prepared for this examination and will not be allowed to present themselves at it at too early an age. The view that the qualifications of teachers in high schools have declined is not supported by statistics prepared for the last ten years showing the proportion of qualified teachers on the establishments of the various classes of schools. The total expenditure on Secondary schools for Indian boys increased from Rs. 33,83,416 to Rs. 35,03,828. The proportion of the total increase from all sources continues to be less than the proportion of increase in fee receipts. This is satisfactory as showing that the people are appreciating and valuing education and are prepared to pay for it in increasing proportion.

Primary schools.

552. During the year 1902-1903 the number of primary schools for Indian boys increased by 3·2 *per cent.* and the number of pupils by 6·1 *per cent.* It is very satisfactory therefore to find that there has been a further improvement during the year under review, the increases under the heads indicated having been 3·5 and 8·2 *per cent.* respectively, the number of schools being 49,093 and the number of pupils 1,391,997. As pointed out however, in paragraph 549 above, there is still only one school to every three villages in Bengal; and the number of schools of this class must be very largely increased before any real satisfaction can be felt.

Considerable advance was made with the scheme sanctioned last year for establishing training schools to which teachers in primary schools are sent for a two years' course of training in the art of teaching. Altogether 41 additional schools of this class were opened during the year. Many more schools of this class are, however, urgently required; and, as soon as the necessary funds are forthcoming, this will be one of the first charges which will have to be met.

Education of females.

553. It was observed in paragraph 534 of last year's Report that the various measures taken by Government with the object of advancing and encouraging the education of females in this Province had borne some fruit, and that there had been a substantial increase during the year 1902-1903 both in the number of institutions of this class and in the number of pupils attending them. During the year 1903-1904 the progress of this important branch of education has been much more rapid; the number of schools having increased by 36·5 *per cent.* and the number of pupils by 28·1 *per cent.* Altogether 148,874 girls were under instruction as against 116,169 in the previous year and 96,050 in the year 1901-1902, the increase being most marked in the number of pupils attending lower primary schools. Encouraging as these results are, the proportion of female students to the total number of girls of a school-going age (2·8 *per cent.*) is still insignificant; and the need for patient and continued effort and for the loyal co-operation of the Hindu and Muhammadan communities remains undiminished.

The total expenditure from all sources on schools for Indian girls increased from Rs. 3,81,386 to Rs. 4,17,131. The contributions from fees and other

sources were Rs. 2,19,614, showing a small increase on the previous year's figures.

One of the greatest difficulties hitherto experienced in establishing and maintaining schools for Hindu and Muhammadan girls has been the lack of qualified female teachers; and, as stated in last year's report, steps were taken during the year 1902-1903 to improve the educational qualifications of teachers of this class and to increase their number by opening training classes in connection with several high English and Mission schools. In pursuance of the same object, it was decided during the year under review to encourage schoolmasters' wives and Hindu and Muhammadan widows to qualify as teachers; and, as an experimental measure, training classes for persons of these classes have been opened at suitable places, stipends being given to pupils who are ready to undergo the prescribed course of instruction.

General reluctance is displayed by parents to allow their daughters to continue their studies after they have reached a marriageable age. In order to meet such cases, the system instituted in the year 1902-1903 of appointing zanana teachers for women and girls of respectable position and family who by the custom of the country do not appear in public was extended; while it has recently been decided to allow girls who obtain primary or middle scholarships to retain their stipends even if they do not attend a school, provided that they prosecute their studies under suitable teachers and show good progress at the end of the year.

Education of Europeans.

554. The number of European schools in the Province is 80. At the end of the year there were 8,376 scholars borne on the rolls, 263 being in Government schools, 6,891 in aided schools, and 1,222 in unaided schools. Of the 80 schools 30 are managed and largely supported by various Roman Catholic organisations: these impart instruction to over half the total number of European and Eurasian children in Bengal. The total expenditure on European education in Bengal amounted to Rs. 16,10,995, towards which Government contributed Rs. 3,36,689.

Education of Muhammadans.

555. It was observed in last year's report that during the year 1902-1903 there had been an increase of 5·8 *per cent.* in the number of Muhammadan pupils under instruction as compared with an increase of 5·2 *per cent.* in the total number of pupils of all religions. It was remarked that this was a hopeful sign, and the hope was expressed that it indicated a real and lasting awakening on the part of the community to the advantages of education. So far as can be judged from the figures for the year 1903-1904, there are hopes that this anticipation may be fulfilled, the number of Muhammadan pupils having shown a further increase of 11·7 *per cent.* as compared with an increase of 7·9 *per cent.* in the number of pupils of all religions. Important results are also anticipated from a scheme elaborated during the year under review by a conference of experts for developing the indigenous Muhammadan primary schools which exist throughout the Province. This scheme has received Government's sanction and will be brought into operation as soon as funds permit.

Hostels.

556. The usefulness of hostels is now thoroughly appreciated, and many colleges and schools have institutions of this class attached to them. The accommodation at present available at these institutions is altogether inadequate, providing, as it does, for only 2 *per cent.* of the students attending Arts Colleges and secondary schools.

It has been found that the existing rules for the regulation of hostels and students' messes are ineffective, that the students are frequently left without proper supervision and control, and that the conditions under which they live are in many instances extremely undesirable. A Conference of the heads of institutions in Calcutta was convened for the purpose of considering the subject, and it is hoped that, as a result of the deliberations of these gentlemen, it may be possible to prepare a body of regulations which will be of practical utility for the future.

The question of enabling District Boards to contribute towards the construction and maintenance of hostels received careful consideration during the year. The local officers and authorities who were consulted in the matter were practically unanimous in recommending legislation, and proposals on the subject will shortly be submitted to the Government of India.

Reformatory Schools.

[Annual Report on the Reformatory Schools at Alipore and Hazaribagh for 1903; Judicial and Administrative Statistics of British India; Section XI.]

Population.

557. The number of admissions in the two schools fell from 156 in 1902 to 107 during the year under review, this being the lowest figure reached in the last four years. Government has often expressed a belief that many of the boys sent to the Reformatories might be more suitably dealt with under the provisions relating to youthful offenders in the Criminal Procedure Code and the Reformatory Schools Act; and it is gratifying to observe that the Boards of Management have been careful to scrutinize the admissions with the object of ascertaining whether any of the boys sent to the Reformatories could not have been better treated under the provisions already referred to. As a result of this examination, 28 boys were released during the year as against 12 in 1902 and 4 in 1901.

The judicial returns for the year show that 269 youthful offenders were discharged on probation of good conduct under section 562 of the Criminal Procedure Code, and that 30 boys were discharged after admonition or made over to their parents or guardians under section 31 of the Reformatory Schools Act.

Health, discipline and education.

558. The health of the boys was on the whole satisfactory in both the schools. There was a slight decrease in the number of offences and punishments in the Alipore School; but they were more numerous at Hazaribagh than in the preceding year. Proper attention was given to the education, moral discipline and physical exercise of the boys.

A report on the arrangements for separating the boys at night in the Alipore school was submitted during the year. It was represented that these arrangements are a relic of the days when the building was a jail; that they are open to strong objections as prejudicial to the health and spirits of the inmates; and that they are unsuitable at any rate for the younger boys. On receipt of this report, Government intimated that it would be prepared to consider any well-devised scheme which the Board might formulate for the purpose of improving the present arrangements. Subsequently, the Director of Public Instruction inspected the school, and reported that to put it on a really satisfactory footing it would be necessary to devise a comprehensive scheme of rebuilding and reorganization. He stated that, in spite of all improvements, the institution could, in his opinion, never be a school, but would always retain the character of a jail, unless a radical change was made in the structural condition of the old building. At the same time he pointed out that the area of the land is limited, the buildings unsuitable and the cubicles insanitary; and that, in these circumstances, it was undesirable either to enlarge or to rebuild the school on its present site. He was convinced, therefore, that the most satisfactory arrangement would be to remove the school to a short distance from Calcutta.

It appeared to Government that in the present state of the buildings it is difficult to give effect to the principles enunciated by the Government of India in their Resolution No. 374—79, dated the 2nd September 1899; that the present defects of the structure can only be removed by a large and expensive building scheme; and that it would be impolitic to carry out such a scheme on the area at present occupied by the school, if suitable arrangements can be made for its removal elsewhere. In these circumstances a representative Committee was formed to consider the question in all its bearings.

Industries.

559. During the year the recognized policy of Government that all boys of the agricultural classes should be concentrated at Hazaribagh and all boys of the industrial castes at Alipore was given effect to. The plan of adapting the instruction given to the boys to their hereditary occupations also received careful attention; and with this object the number of industries in the Alipore School was increased from 9 to 13. The need of teaching the boys the trades of their castes has been frequently emphasised by Government and is again illustrated by the figures supplied for the year under review. Out of 161 boys released from the Alipore School during the three years preceding the year under report, only 22 were found to be following the industries taught them

at the school; and out of 189 boys released from the Hazaribagh Reformatory during that period, only 75 were employed in the pursuits in which they had been trained. These figures are, it is true, not altogether conclusive, inasmuch as many of the boys released could not be traced or had died, others were unemployed or with friends, while some were of bad character or had been reconvicted. The number thus accounted for was 89 in the case of the former, and 83 in the case of the latter, school. At the same time, the fact that 50 of the boys released from the Alipore Reformatory and 31 of those discharged from the Hazaribagh School were following occupations other than those taught to them appears to show that the efforts made to train the boys for their future careers have not been altogether successful.

560. A satisfactory feature of the year is that the system of licensing has been more extensively resorted to than has hitherto been the case. Besides the 46 boys already working under this system at the close of the year 1902, as many as 114 boys were licensed out as against 66 during the preceding year. Out of the 89 boys of the Alipore School under license, 19 escaped from their employers and 17 were returned to the school for bad conduct; while of the 71 boys licensed out from the Hazaribagh School, 13 boys were returned to the school. It is regrettable that this system proved a failure in so many cases. As pointed out in last year's Report, it is necessary that care should be exercised in the first instance in the selection of boys for such employment; but it seems possible that these failures may partially be due to the fact that some of the boys selected have not been trained specially for the occupation followed by them under license. In particular, this seems to be the case with boys licensed out for employment in jute mills and other similar institutions for which no special training has hitherto been provided in the Reformatory. To remove this defect, it has been decided to introduce a spinning and weaving department in the Alipore School. As a large number of the boys licensed out are employed in jute and silk mills, it is hoped that the introduction of this industry in the School will tend to make this system more successful. Licensing.

During the year Government approved, as an experimental measure, a proposal that boys of inferior castes should be licensed out as domestic servants to employers of labour who are private persons. It is trusted that this measure will lead to a further extension of the licensing system.

561. The percentage of failures to trace out the histories of boys for three years after their release was the same in 1903 as in the previous year; and the attention of the officers of the Education Department has again been drawn to their duties in this respect. One of the chief objects which the Government of India had in view in transferring the management of the Reformatories from the Jail to the Education Department was to attain more complete and satisfactory information about boys who had left the schools than was possible under the old system. It was stated that it was desirable that the boys should not be left without help and guidance on leaving school, and that a watch should be kept over them, both in their own interests and also in order that the result of the working of the schools might be known. It is evident from the large number of cases in which the histories of boys after their release is unknown that this object has not yet been attained. Government has recently sanctioned the appointment of an additional Sub-Inspector of Schools to assist in maintaining a watch over released boys in Calcutta; and as over one-third of the boys discharged from the Alipore School belong to that city, there should be a marked improvement, in future, in tracing out and finding employment for such boys. Tracing of discharged boys.

562. The net cost to Government on account of the Alipore School was Rs. 26,202, and on account of the Hazaribagh School Rs. 24,783. Financial.

Literature and the Press.

563. The number of publications received and catalogued in the Bengal Library during the year was 2,887; of this number 2,117 were books and 770 periodicals. The periodicals represent 111 distinct issues; 1,832 were original publications, and 285 republications or translations; 670 were educational in tendency, and 2,217, non-educational. Of the publications received 17 were Bengal Library.

catalogued under "Art," 23 under "Biography," 58 under "Drama," 137 under "Fiction," 66 under "History and Geography," 443 under "Language," 45 under "Law," 144 under "Medicine," 850 under "Miscellaneous," 23 under "Philosophy," 195 under "Poetry," 756 under "Religion," 128 under "Science," and 4 under "Travels."

Literature of the year.

564. Of the higher arts music is the only one studied on scientific principles. The members of an association lately formed for the cultivation of Indian music have recently started a journal, which, besides giving with their notation a collection of songs by well-known composers, publishes with a Bengali translation familiar Sanskrit works on the Art. No biography of remarkable merit was published during the year. With one or two exceptions the works published under "Drama" consist of social farces of little or no merit. In most of the exceptions the influence of Shakespeare is very strongly marked. Under "Fiction" it is somewhat surprising to find authors basing their stories on Rider Haggard's "She" and Goldsmith's "Vicar of Wakefield." The literature under "History and Geography" consists mostly of school-books; the only exceptions being "The Conquest of Bengal by Bakhtear Khiliji," and the English translations of the Akbar Nama, the Reyaz-us-Salatin and the Seir Mutaquerin, which are in course of publication by the Asiatic Society of Bengal. In the literature under "Language" signs are found of a growing influence of Bengali over other Indian vernaculars. Under "Miscellaneous" a number of publications were issued dealing with social, economic and educational topics. The literature under "Philosophy" consists as usual of editions and expositions of old Indian systems. The poetry of the year included an edition of the poems of the old Vaishnava Saint Narottam Das, and a number of epics, lyrics and other smaller poems. In the language on "Religion" evidence is found that the Hindu Revival movement, which began some 20 years ago, has lost none of its force and entered on a new phase of development, its influence being most marked on Brahmoism. The two most important scientific publications of the year were one treating of the classification of metals, their medicinal properties, and the methods of calcining and refining them, and the other giving a chronological account of Hindu Astronomy together with biographical sketches of eminent writers on the subject. The Bengal Librarian makes the following remarks on the literature of the year:—

"Two distinct lines of thought are noticeable in the Bengali literature of the day—one following the trend of Western culture and the other drawing its inspiration from old Hindu thought as enshrined in Sanskrit books on religion and philosophy. It is easy to tell from a cursory glance at the contents of a book whether the writer has taken the Western or the Eastern culture for his model. But there is a third school, though its adherents are as yet few in number, which tries to steer a middle course and which has taken upon itself the task of interpreting the East in the light of the West. Unlike the first two schools, which are exclusive of each other and cannot be said to have any sympathy with their respective aims and aspirations, this one sympathises with both and tries to find a common platform for their moral and intellectual programme. And much of what appears obscure and unintelligible in the literature of the day will be understood if its source of inspiration can be traced to any one of these schools. To the reflecting mind, however, this division of schools only foreshadows a stage of higher culture, which is to mould and unify them into one and thereby materially aid the cause of progress and education in the country."

The most important of the publications issued by the Bengal Secretariat Book Depôt during the year were :—

"Appointments in Bengal and their holders," "Bibliography of Bengal," "Monograph on the silk fabrics of Bengal," "Mundari Grammar," "Kurukh (Orrao) English Dictionary," Butwara, Excise, and Inspection Manuals and "Rules and Orders of the Bengal Education Department."

Working of Act XXV of 1867.

565. The total number of books delivered for registration in Calcutta and mufassal offices during the year was 2,877. Twenty-one prosecutions under the Act were instituted. Conviction was obtained in every case.

The Native Press.

566. The number of native-owned English newspapers increased from 22 to 26, and of Vernacular and Anglo-Vernacular newspapers from 70 to 84. No striking change in the tone of the Native Press or in the topics discussed was observable last year. The Press as a whole criticised the action of Government and its officers unfavourably; and in too many instances exhibited the defects of exaggeration and lack of sobriety and restraint which have so

often been alleged to be characteristic of the Press in Bengal. An unpleasant side of native journalism is the tendency to personal attack on individual officers of Government who have in some particular incident incurred the displeasure of the Press, and who are thereafter held up to continual reprobation. Such attacks on individual officers who, as a rule, though not always, were Europeans, were not infrequent last year. As in other countries so in this province also the proprietors of newspapers find that nothing conduces to sale of their publications so much as an account of a "*cause celèbre*," and when the natural supply of such occurrences fails, there is a tendency to supply the deficiency by invention and exaggeration.

It is more pleasant to notice that the better class papers took more pains than in previous years in verification of facts before launching grave charges, and that they readily made withdrawals and corrections when it was shown that thev had been misled by wrong information.

Literary Societies.

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION REPORT FOR [illegible] PART II, PAGES [illegible]

Arts and Sciences.

Schools of Art.

567. The number of Art schools returned during the year 1903-1904 was altogether 4 with 423 pupils against the same number of schools with an attendance of 351 pupils returned in the previous year. The one school returned under this head from the Presidency Division in the year 1902-1903 appears to have ceased to work, and these four schools were returned all from the town of Calcutta, the number of unaided Art schools in the town having increased from two to three.

Government School of Art.

568. Its attendance showed an increase from 230 to 241. The total expenditure during the year under report was Rs. 45,690, of which Rs. 39,880 was met from Provincial revenues and Rs. 5,810 from fees. In the previous year the total expenditure on this school was Rs. 29,427, of which Rs. 25,099 was derived from Provincial revenues and Rs 4,328 from fees. Of the 241 students on the rolls of this school returned on the 31st March last, the number that attended the course in Division I—Industrial Art side—was 224, including 35 students belonging to the Artizan class who were admitted on reduced fees, while the number of students who attended Division II—the Fine Art side—was 17, who continued the usual routine of practice in drawing and painting.

Under the heading of the "Advanced Design Class," the special grant of Rs. 500, sanctioned for experiments, was utilised in testing the suitability of the lime and sand obtainable in Calcutta for use in fresco work in place of materials brought from Jeypore, and also in proving the durability of the plaster, etc, of various colours in exterior decoration exposed to sun and rain. The first set of experiments showed that, though the Jeypore lime is necessary for the final coating in the best work, a great saving can be effected by using Calcutta materials for the ground work.

The Art Gallery.

569. The gallery was open to the public for 208 days against 179 days in the previous year. The number of visitors was 15,620 against 13,700. Of the visitors, 2,490 were Europeans and Eurasians, 922 Muhammadans, and 12,208 Hindus. Rupees 3,735 were spent in the purchase of Works of Art and in frames and screens for exhibiting them. The most noticeable of the purchases were the following:—

I.—A fine collection of brass and copper work from Western Tibet.

II.—Paintings from the Mogul period, including three of the time of Sher Shah and one of Shahjehan.

Technical Schools.

570. The number of these schools during 1903-1904 was 27 attended by 806 pupils against 25 schools with 701 pupils in the previous year. One of these schools, viz., the school at Ranchi, is managed by Government, six were managed by District Boards, 15 were aided and five were on the unaided list. The industries taught in these schools are carpenters' and blacksmiths' work,

tinmanship, carriage-painting, etc. In the Reformatory Schools at Alipore and Hazaribagh also industrial arts are taught to many of the inmates of the schools.

The Pottery scholar of the district of Nadia, who was sent to the Bombay School of Art in the previous year to receive training in drawing and designing, finished his training during the year under report, and returned to take up work under the District Board in accordance with the conditions under which he was given his scholarship. He will now experiment in Nadia, and, if successful, the Board will consider whether to assist him in establishing a factory or a school.

In primary, secondary, and training schools, Drawing forms a subject of study.

Special Commercial Classes.

571. Special Commercial Classes were opened in connection with the Presidency College in June 1903. Five students who passed from the Hare School and the Uttarpara Government School the School Final Examination for the C class were admitted into the first year class on payment of the same rate of fees with students reading for the F.A. Examination. The course prescribed for these classes consists chiefly of those subjects which are required of persons intending to enter into commercial pursuits.

In technical and commercial classes opened in connexion with schools for Europeans and also in those for Indian pupils under native or European management, the subjects taught are type-writing, short-hand, telegraphy and book-keeping, while in girls' schools dress-making, needlework, cooking and household-work are also taught.

The study of science is prosecuted in primary, secondary and training schools, in Arts Colleges, and also in the Medical College and in the Sibpur Engineering College.

Of the three new Research Scholars elected during the year under report, one has taken up Mathematics, with special reference to practical Astronomy as a subject of his research, the second has taken up Physical Science, with special reference to the effect of the transmission of electric waves or X rays in electrolytic solutions, or the connexion between plant life and human life, and the third has taken up Hindu Philosophy, with special reference to Mimansa Philosophy.

Examinations.

572. *B.Sc. Examination.*—There were 14 candidates against 19 in the previous year at this examination, of whom 5 against 8 passed.

Bifurcation of studies.—The B and C Classes.—Altogether 70 candidates presented themselves at the B Class Examination, of whom 39 passed; while out of ten candidates, five only were successful at the C Class Examination. In the previous year the number of candidates at the former was 67, of whom 25 were successful, and 14 gained scholarships, while at the latter the number of candidates was 17, of whom six only were successful, four obtaining scholarships. On the results of the B Class Examination for 1903-1904, 14 junior scholarships (three first grade, five second grade, and six third grade) were awarded. The Barisal Zilla school carried off eight of these scholarships, viz., two first grade, two second grade, and four third grade. On the result of the C Class Examination, four junior scholarships were awarded, the Hare School carrying off two of them. These examinations, like the Entrance Examination of the Calcutta University, are held at the end of the student's school career, and are conducted by the Education Department. The increase in the number of passes at the B Class Examination is a hopeful sign. All the B Class scholars have joined the Civil Engineering College, and all the C Class scholars have been admitted into the Presidency College.

CHAPTER VIII.—ARCHÆOLOGY.

Archæology.

573. The work of restoring and preserving the ruins at Gaur and Pandua was nearly completed. Much was done with a view to preserving the Jaga Mohan of the Kanarak Temple. Land was under acquisition for the temple, and for the construction of an inspection bungalow for the use of visitors thereto. Further repairs were done to some of the temples at Bhubaneswar and the restoration of the Rohtas Palace, and some of the outlying temples, mosques, and tombs in the hills, was finished.

CHAPTER IX.—MISCELLANEOUS.

Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction.

See GENERAL ADMINISTRATION REPORT FOR 1901-1902, PART II, PAGE 325.

Ecclesiastical.

574. The Ecclesiastical establishment in Bengal during the year, paid entirely or in part by Government, consisted of the Lord Bishop of Calcutta, the Archdeacon of Calcutta, the Domestic Chaplain to the Lord Bishop, the Registrar of the Diocese and Archdeaconry of Calcutta, the Most Revd. Archbishop Dr. Brice Meuleman, S.J., 13 Chaplains of the Church of England, two Chaplains of the Church of Scotland, 13 Ministers of the Additional Clergy Society or other Societies, and 9 priests of the Roman Catholic Church.

Stationery Department.

[Statistics of the Stationery Department for 1903-1904.]

575. There was a balance of stationery stores of Rs. 11,18,655 at the beginning of the year. Stores to the value of Rs. 6,02,467 were received from England, and those purchased in India amounted to Rs. 20,23,129. There were other receipts to the extent of Rs. 3,28,318. The total issues were Rs. 32,65,574, leaving a balance at the end of the year of Rs. 8,06,995. The issues of English stores show an increase of over 36 per cent., principally type-writers and accessories, while Indian stores show a decrease of over 16 per cent., due to reduced rates and a slight falling off in the demand for country paper.

Printing.

[Report of Superintendent, Government Printing, Bengal, for 1903-1904.]

576. The several printing presses under the Government of Bengal show a total profit of Rs. 1,08,654 as compared with Rs. 90,098 in the preceding year. Practically the whole of this was contributed by the Presidency Jail Press.

Chemical Examiner's Department.

[Report of the Chemical Examiner for 1903; Judicial and Administrative Statistics of British India, Section VIII.]

577. During the year 5,359 articles were examined against 4,450 in the previous year, the increase occurring under all heads. The total number of medico-legal cases investigated was 1,598. The viscera of 627 individuals suspected to have been poisoned were examined, and poison was detected in 44·97 per cent. of the cases. As usual the most common poison was opium, which was found in 27·48 of the cases. The viscera of 233 horned cattle were examined: poison was detected in 73·29 per cent. of the cases. One hundred and fifty-one samples of drinking water were analysed quantitatively; of these six were classed as impure.

Zoological Garden, Calcutta.

[Administration Report of the Zoological Garden, Calcutta, for 1903-1904.]

578. During the year the Government of India made a grant of Rs. 1,00,000 towards the improvement of the Garden. It has been decided to devote the greater part of this amount to permanent improvements, such as the reform of the drainage of the Garden, and the provision and reconstruction of houses required for the accommodation of the animals confined. Nawab Khwaja Salimulla Bahadur of Dacca also gave a liberal contribution of Rs. 20,000 for the construction of a new bear-house. The total amount of donations and subscriptions received during the year, exclusive of the two contributions referred to above, was Rs. 23,908. The total number of visitors to the Garden during the year, excluding students, children under age, etc., was 215,013, and the entrance receipts amounted to Rs. 15,956. The total expenditure was Rs. 86,827. The numbers of mammals, birds and reptiles in the Garden were respectively 464, 842 and 238.

Veterinary Department.

[Report of the Civil Veterinary Department, Bengal, and of the Bengal Veterinary College for 1903-1904.]

Veterinary Dispensaries and Veterinary Assistants.

579. During the year under review two new dispensaries were opened, and the total number of dispensaries working at its close was 22. The growing popularity of these institutions is again illustrated by the increase in the number of animals which received treatment, particularly in that of out-patients which was nearly doubled, during the year. The most marked feature in the work of the Department was the increase in the number of cases treated in the villages by itinerant Veterinary Assistants; 60,151 animals having received treatment from these officers as against 21,439 in the previous year and 7,346 in the year 1901-1902. There is no way in which the Department can prove more useful to the people at large than by sending out officers of this stamp, to be constantly on tour in the interior, to inoculate freely for rinderpest and to report upon and deal with outbreaks of all kinds of epizootic diseases. The development of this work is one of the most important functions of the Department, and it is therefore gratifying to observe the increasing extent to which the benefits of veterinary science are being brought home to the peasantry. At present, however, the number of qualified men is insufficient to fill the posts for which they are required; and during the year under review it was again found to be impossible to meet the demands of several districts. In order to overcome this difficulty, the Government has recently sanctioned the proposal of the Director of Land Records that, as a temporary measure, vacancies in the subordinate staff of the Department should be filled by veterinary graduates from Bombay and Lahore until a sufficient number of Bengal veterinary graduates are available for employment.

Epidemic diseases

580. The number of animals (57) admitted into the Belgachia Contagious Diseases Hospital was the same as in the previous year. Of these, 43 were found to be suffering from Glanders and had to be destroyed, and one died of that disease. The Superintendent of the Veterinary Department observes, however, that these cases represent a mere fraction of those actually existing in Calcutta. The introduction of the Glanders and Farcy Act, XIII of 1899, into that city and its suburbs has long been contemplated by Government; but, as stated in last year's Report, it has hitherto been deferred, on financial grounds, pending the revision of the provincial settlement. The necessary provision has, however, now been made in the budget. Proposals for the repeal of Act VIII (B. C.) of 1880 have been submitted to the Government of India, and rules under section 14 of Act XIII of 1899 are now under the consideration of this Government.

There was a slight increase in the total number of cases of cattle-disease reported from the districts during the year. There was a very marked increase in the number of animals attacked by foot-and-mouth disease, and a noticeable decrease in the number of those suffering from rinderpest. There

were over 25,500 cases of the former disease as against 8,436 in the previous year; very severe outbreaks occurring in Backergunge and Palamau, from each of which districts over 9,000 cases were reported. The preventive measures taken in the former district were most effective; practically every animal affected received treatment; and it is satisfactory to observe that the percentage of deaths was as low as ·04. On the other hand the number of animals attacked by rinderpest (15,266) was the lowest on record during the last four years; and it is clear that there has been a steady and general decrease in the number of such cases since the year 1900-1901 when they reached the large total of nearly 64,000. As in the previous year, this disease was specially prevalent in the districts of Khulna and Palamau, nearly 3,000 animals being attacked in the former and over 4,500 in the latter district. Altogether 9,454 cattle were immunised, but unfortunately these operations had to be suspended owing to a deficiency in the supply of serum and partly also in consequence of the smallness of the staff available. This stoppage of the supply was the more regrettable, as it occurred at the beginning of the rinderpest season when, owing to the outbreaks which occurred in various places, the demand was at its greatest.

Improvement of Stock.

581. The question of establishing depôts for the rearing of bulls in this Province came under the consideration of Government shortly before the close of the year. The scheme which has been approved is that animals should, in the first instance, be selected for cattle-breeding operations from the farms at Pusa and Sripur, and that, where the conditions of climate vary, they should be sent away to be acclimatised before being used. For this purpose, it is proposed that the farms at Pusa and Sripur should be utilised for young bulls intended for service in Bihar and Bhagalpur, and that depôts for Central and Northern Bengal should be established at Belgachia and Rampur Boalia.

The Veterinary College.

582. Altogether 43 students were under instruction throughout the year. The results of the examinations of the three classes were extremely satisfactory.

Belgachia Infirmary.

583. There was an increase of 434 in the total number of cases treated in the infirmary during the year, which was mainly due to the large number of in-patients received. Altogether there were 2,819 patients of all classes; and 723 operations were performed as against 623 in the previous year. The Superintendent draws attention to the fact that though a large number of cruelty cases came before the Magistrates of Calcutta, comparatively few animals were sent by them to the Infirmary. There is reason to believe that cruelty would be more effectually prevented if, instead of fining the owners and allowing them to continue to work their animals, Magistrates were to send the latter to the hospital for treatment. The attention of Magistrates in Calcutta has been drawn to the matter.

Financial.

584. The Provincial cost of maintaining the Department exceeded that of last year by over Rs. 15,000. The increase was chiefly due to greater expenditure on account of the pay of lecturers, increased establishment, the feeding of animals and contingencies.

Miscellaneous.

Boundary Commissioner's lists.

585. In his report on the census of Bengal, the Superintendent of Census pointed out that in many districts the Boundary Commissioner's lists, which had been prepared nearly 30 years previously, were, where they had not been superseded by the records of later surveys, in a state of hopeless confusion. He observed that the arrangement of them in general, though supposed to be geographical, had not been very carefully made, and that as so long a period had elapsed since their compilation, thanas and even districts had been extensively rearranged, with the result that the old arrangement of the villages in them was no longer suitable, and that, even where the lists had been kept up to date, the same serial number appeared two or three times in the same list. He therefore suggested that the lists should be systematically revised according to the present jurisdiction of thanas and districts. It was accordingly decided by Government to depute a selected Deputy Collector to revise the Boundary Commissioner's lists. When finally revised the lists, as

well as the *thanawari* lists of villages supplied by the Settlement Department for districts where recent surveys have been made, will be kept up to date under the supervision of the Director of Land Records.

Commemoration of buildings of historical interest.

586. During the year the Government of India issued orders for the commemoration of the houses or dwellings in India, which are notable for their historical associations, or in which distinguished public men, whether European or Indian, are known to have resided at different portions of their careers. To this end small memorial medallions were placed on several buildings in Calcutta and the mufassal, recording briefly the facts which gave them historic interest.

Curtailment of Reports and Returns.

587. In June 1903 Government issued a Resolution recording what had been done, in pursuance of the orders of the Government of India of 1901, to curtail existing reports and returns, and to abolish those which were unnecessary. It was found possible to dispense with a large number of reports and returns, previously submitted, and to curtail largely several others which could not be discontinued.

Subordinate Civil Service.

588. During the year as part of the general scheme for the reorganisation of the Subordinate Civil Service, sanction was given to the addition of 36 Sub-Deputy Collectors to the lowest grade for employment on settlement work.

Additional Commissioner of Patna.

589. Sanction was given during the year to the retention of the appointment of Additional Commissioner till 1st January 1905, or till some permanent arrangement should be made for the future administration of the Patna Division.